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HURRY BUNGSHO JABBERJEE, B.A.

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BABOO JABBERJEE

B.A.

BY

F. ANSTEY

AUTHOR OF

"VICE VERSA," "THE PARIAH," "VOCES POPULI," ETC.

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WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY

J. BERNARD PARTRIDGE

6-80

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INTRODUCTORY LETTER FROM BABOO JABBERJEE.

To the Hon'ble —— Punch.

VENERABLE AND LUDICROUS SIR. — Permit me most respectfully to bring beneath your notice a proposal which I serenely anticipate will turn up trumps under the fructifying sunshine of your esteemed approbation.

Sir, I am an able B.A. of a respectable Indian University, now in this country for purposes of being crammed through Inns of Court and Law Exam., and rendering myself a completely fledged Pleader or Barrister in the Native Bar of the High Court.

Since my sojourn here, I have accomplished the laborious perusal of your transcendent and tip-top periodical, and, hoity toity! I am like a duck in thunder with admiring wonderment at the drollishness and jocosity with which your paper is ready to burst in its pictorial department. But, alack! when I turn my critical attention to the literary contents, I am met with a lamentable deficiency and no great shakes, for I note there the fly in the ointment and *hiatus valde deflendus*—to wit the utter

absenteeism of a correct and classical style in English composition.

To the highly educated native gentleman who searches your printed articles, hoping fondly to find himself in a well of English pure and undefiled, it proves merely to fish in the air. Conceive, Sir, the disgustful result to one saturated to the skin of his teeth in best English masterpieces of immaculate and moderately good prose extracts and dramatic passages, published with notes for the use of the native student, at weltering in a hotchpot and hurley-burley of arbitrarily distorted and very vulgarised cockneydoms and purely London provincialities, which must be of necessity to him as casting pearls before a swine!

And I have the honour to inform you of a number of cultivated lively young native B.A.'s, both here and in my country, who are quite capable to appreciate really fine writing and sonoriferous periods if published in your paper, and which would infallibly result in a feather in your cap and bring increase of grit to the mill.

If, Honoured Sir, you feel disposed to bolster yourself up with the wet blanket of a *non possumus*, and reply to me that your existing quill-drivers are too fat-witted and shallow-pated for the production of more pretentiously polished lucubrations—aye, not even if they burn the night-light oil and hear the chimes at midnight! I will not be hoodwinked by the superficiality

of your *cui bono*, and shall make you the answer that I am willing *for an exceedingly paltry honorarium* to rush into the Gordian knot and write you the most superior essays on every conceivable and inconceivable subject under the sun, as per enclosed samples which I forward respectfully for your delightful and golden opinions, guaranteeing faithfully that all of your readers in every hemisphere and postal district will fall in love with such a new departure and fresh tack.

The specimens I send are *not my best*, only very ordinary and humdrum affairs—but *ex pede Herculem!* Hon'ble Sir, and you will see how transcendentally superior are even such poor effusions compared to the fiddle-faddle and gim-crack style of article with which you are being fobbed off by puzzle-headed and self-opiniated nincompoops.

I can also turn out rhymed poetry after models of Poets TENNYSON, COWPER, Mrs HEMANS, SOUTHEY, & Co., *done to a tittle*, so as not to be detected, even by the cynosure, as mere spurious imitation, but in every respect up to the mark and the real Simon Pure.

Therefore, Hon'ble Sir, do not hesitate to strike while the iron is incandescent and bleed freely, even if it should be necessary, prior to engaging your humble petitioner's services, to turn out one or more of your present contributioners crop and heels, and lay them on the shelf

of their own incompetencies. Remember that the slightest act of volition on your part can exalt my pecuniary status to the skies, as well as confer distinguished and unparagoned ennoblement upon your *cacoëthes scribendi.*

I remain, respected Sir, Your most obsequious Servant,

HURRY BUNGSHO JABBERJEE, B.A.

P.S. and N.B.—Being so unacquainted with the limner's art, I cannot *at present* undertake the etching of caricatures *et hoc genus omne.* However, if such is your will, Hon'ble Sir, I will take the cow by the horns, after preliminary course of instruction at Government Art School, all expenses, &c., to be defrayed on the nail out of your purse of Fortunatus, seeing that your esteemed correspondent is so hard up between two stools that he is reduced to a choice of Hodson's Horse! H. B. J.

Mr Jabberjee apologises for the unambitious scope of his work: sundry confidences, criticisms and complaints.

I

WHEN I first received intimation from the supernal and spanking hand of Hon'ble *Mr Punch*, that he smiled with fatherly benignity at my humble request that he should offer myself as a regular poorly-paid contributor, I blessed my stars and was as if to jump over the moon for jubilation and sprightfulness.

But, heigh-ho! *surgit amari aliquid*, and his condescending patronage was dolefully alloyed with the inevitable dash of bitters which, as Poet SHAKSPEARE remarks, withers the galled jade until it winces. For with an iron heel has Hon'ble *Mr P.* declined sundry essays of enormous length and importance, composed in Addisonian, Johnsonian, and Gibbonian phraseology on assorted topics, such as "Love," "Civilisation," "Matrimony," "Superstition," "Is Courage a Virtue, or *Vice Versâ?*" and has recommended me instead to devote my pen to quite ephemeral and fugacious topics, and merely commit to paper such reflections, critical opinions, and experiences as may turn up in the potluck of my daily career.

What wonder that on reading such a *sine quâ non* and ultimatum my *vox faucibus hæsit* and stuck in my gizzard with bashful sheepishness, for how to convulse the Thames and set it on fire and all agog with amazement at the humdrum incidents of so very ordinary an existence as mine, which is spent in the diligent study of Roman, Common, International, and Canonical Law from morn to dewy eve in the lecture-hall or the library of my inn, and, as soon as the shades of night are falling fast, in returning to my domicilium at Ladbroke Grove with the undeviating punctuality of a tick?

However, being above all things desirous not to let slip the golden opportunity and pocket the root of all evil, I decided to let my diffidence go to the wall and boldly record every jot and tittle, however humdrum, with the critical reflections and censorious observations arising therefrom, remembering that, though the fabulous and mountain-engendered mouse was no doubt at the time considered but a fiasco and flash in the pan by its maternal progenitor, nevertheless that same identical mouse rendered yeomanry services at a subsequent period to the lion involved in the compromising intricacies of a landing-net!

Benevolent reader, *de te fabula narratur.* Perchance the mousey bantlings of my insignificant brain may nibble away the cords of prejudice and exclusiveness now encircling many

highly respectable British lions. Be not angry with me therefore, if in the character of a damned but good-natured friend, I venture on occasions to "hint dislike and hesitate disgust."

The majestic and magnificent matron, under whose aegis I reside for rs. 20 per week, is of lofty lineage, though fallen from that high estate into the peck of troubles, and compelled (owing to severely social disposition) to receive a number of small and select boarders.

Like *Jepthah*, in the play of *Hamlet*, she has one fair daughter and no more, a bewitching and well-proportioned damsel, as fine as a fivepence or a May-day queen. Notwithstanding this, when I summon up my courage to address her, she receives my laborious politeness with a cachinnation like that of a Cheshire cheese, which strikes me all of a heap. Her female parent excuses to me such flabbergasting demeanour on the plea that her daughter is afflicted with great shyness and maidenly modesty, but, on perceiving that she can be skittish and genial in the company of other masculines, I am forced to attribute her contumeliousness to the circumstance that I am a native gentleman of a dark complexion.

In addition, I have the honour to inform you of further specimens of this inurbanity and bearishness from officials who are perfect strangers to the writer. Each morning I journey through the subterranean bowels of the

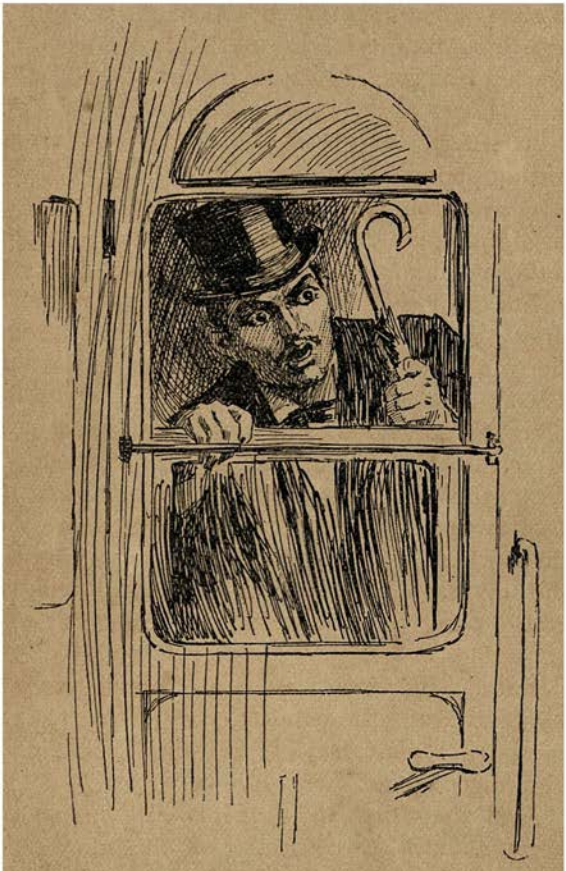
earth to the Temple, and on a recent occasion, when I was descending the stairs in haste to pop into the train, lo and behold, just as I reached the gate, it was shut in my nose by the churlishness of the jack-in-office!

At which, stung to the quick at so unprovoked and unpremeditated an affront, I accosted him severely through the bars of the wicket, demanding sarcastically, "Is *this* your boasted British Jurisprudence?"

The savage heart of the Collector was moved by my expostulation, and he consented to open the gate, and imprint a perforated hole on my ticket; but, alack! his repentance was a day after the fair, for the train had already taken its hook into the Cimmerian gloom of a tunnel! When the next train arrived, I, waiting prudently until it was quiescent, stepped into a compartment, wherein I was dismayed and terrified to find myself alone with an individual and two lively young terriers, which barked minaciously at my legs.

But I, with much presence of mind, protruded my head from the window, vociferating to those upon the platform, "Let out! Let out!! Fighting dogs are here!!!"

And they met my appeal with unmannerly jeerings, until the controller of the train, seeing that I was firm in upholding my dignity of British subject, and claiming my just rights, unfastened the door and permitted me to escape;



"LET OUT! LET OUT!!

but, while I was yet in search of a compartment where no canine elements were in the manger, the train was once more in motion, and I, being no daredevil to take such leap into the dark, was a second time left behind, and a loser of two trains. Moreover, though I have written a humbly indignant petition to the Hon'ble Directors of the Company pointing out loss of time and inconvenience through incivility, and asking them for small pecuniary compensation, they have assumed the rhinoceros hide, and nilled my request with dry eyes.

But I shall next make the further complaint that, even when making every effort to do the civil, the result is apt to kill with kindness; and —as King CHARLES THE FIRST, when they were shuffling off his mortal coil, politely apologised for the unconscionable long time that his head took to decapitate—so I, too, must draw attention to the fact that the duration of formal ceremonious visits, is far too protracted and long drawn out.

Crede experto. A certain young English gentleman, dwelling in the Temple, whose acquaintance I have formed, earnestly requested that I should do him the honour of a visit; and recently, wishing to be hail fellow well met, I presented myself before him about 9.30 A.M.

He greeted me with effusion, shaking me warmly by the hand, and begging me to be seated, and making many inquiries, whether I

preferred India to England, and what progress I was making in my studies, &c., and so forth, all of which I answered faithfully, to the best of my abilities.

After that he addressed me by fits and starts and *longo intervallo*, yet displaying so manifest and absorbent a delight in my society that he could not bring himself to terminate the audience, while I was to conceal my immense wearisomeness and the ardent desire I had conceived to leave him.

And thus he detained me there hour after hour, until five minutes past one P.M., when he recollected, with many professions of chagrin, that he had an appointment to take his tiffin, and dismissed me, inviting me cordially to come again.

If, however, it is expected of me that I can devote three hours and a half to ceremonial civilities, I must respectfully answer with a *Nolo episcopari*, for my time is more precious than rubies, and so I will beg not only Mr MELLADEW, Esq., Barrister-at-law, but all other Anglo-Saxon friends and their families, to accept this as a *verbum sap.* and wink to a blind horse.

Some account of Mr Jabberjee's experiences at the Westminster Play.

II

BEING forearmed by editorial beneficence with ticket of admission to theatrical entertainment by adolescent students at Westminster College, I presented myself at the scene of acting in a state of liveliest and frolicsome anticipation on a certain Wednesday evening in the month of December last, about 7.20 P.M.

At the summit of the stairs I was received by a posse of polite and stalwart striplings in white kids, who, after abstracting large circular orifice from my credentials, ordered me to ascend to a lofty gallery, where, on arriving, I found every chair pre-occupied, and moreover was restricted to a prospect of the backs of numerous juvenile heads, while expected to remain the livelong evening on the tiptoe of expectation and Shank's mare!

This for a while I endured submissively from native timidity and retirement, until my bosom boiled over at the sense of "*Civis Romanus sum*," and, descending to the barrier, I harangued the wicket-keeper with great length and fervid eloquence, informing him that I was graduate of

high-class Native University after passing most tedious and difficult exams with fugitive colours and that it was injurious and deleterious to my "*mens sana in corpore sano*" to remain on legs for some hours beholding what I practically found to be invisible.

But, though he turned an indulgent ear to my quandary, he professed his inability to help me over my "*pons asinorum*," until I ventured to play the ticklish card and inform him that I was a distinguished representative of Hon'ble *Punch*, who was paternally anxious for me to be awarded a seat on the lap of luxury.

Then he unbended, and admitted me to the body of the auditorium, where I was conducted to a coign of vantage in near proximity to members of the fair sex and galaxy of beauty.

Thus, by dint of nude gumption, I was in the bed of clover and seventh heaven, and more so when, on inquiry from a bystander, I understood that the performance was taken from Mr TERRISS'S Adelphi Theatre, which I had heard was conspicuous for excellence in fierce combats, blood-curdling duels, and scenes in court. And I narrated to him how I too, when a callow and unfledged hobbardyhoy, had engaged in theatrical entertainments, and played such parts in native dramas as heroic giant-killers and tiger slayers, in which I was an "*au fait*" and "*facile princeps*," also in select scenes

from SHAKSPEARE'S play of *Macbeth* in English and being correctly attired as a Scotch.

But presently I discovered that the play was quite another sort of Adelphi, being a jocose comedy by a notorious ancient author of the name of TERENCE, and written entirely in Latin, which a contiguous damsel expressed a fear lest she should find it incomprehensible and obscure. I hastened to reassure her by explaining that, having been turned out as a certificated B.A. by Indian College, I had acquired perfect familiarity and nodding acquaintance with the early Roman and Latin tongues, and offering my services as interpreter of "*quicquid agunt homines*," and the entire "*farrago libelli*," which rendered her red as a turkeycock with delight and gratitude. When the performance commenced with a scenic representation of the Roman Acropolis, and a venerable elderly man soliloquising lengthily to himself, and then carrying on a protracted logomachy with another greybeard—although I understood sundry colloquial idioms and phrases such as "*uxorem duxit*," "*carum mihi*," "*quid agis?*" "*cur amat?*" and the like, all of which I assiduously translated *vivâ voce*—I could not succeed in learning the reason why they were having such a snip-snap, until the interval, when the lady informed me herself that it was because one of them had carried off a nautch-girl belonging to the other's son—which caused me to marvel greatly at her erudition.

I looked that, in the next portion of the performance, I might behold the nautch-girl, and witness her forcible rescue—or at least some saltatory exhibition; but, alack! she remained *sotto voce* and hermetically sealed; and though other characters, in addition to the elderly gentlemen, appeared, they were all exclusively masculine in gender, and there was nothing done but to converse by twos and threes. When the third portion opened with a long-desiderated peep of petticoats, I told my neighbour confidently that now at last we were to see this dancing girl and the abduction; but she replied that it was not so, for these females were merely the mother of the wife of another of the youths and her attendant ayah. And even this precious pair, after weeping and wringing their hands for a while, vanished, not to appear again.

Now as the entertainment proceeded, I fell into the dumps with increasing abashment and mortification to see everyone around me, ay, even the women and the tenderest juveniles! clap the hands and laugh in their sleeves with merriment at quirks and gleeks in which—in spite of all my classical proficiency—I could not discover *le mot pour rire* or crack so much as the cream of a jest, but must sit there melancholy as a gib cat or smile at the wrong end of mouth.

For, indeed, I began to fear that I had been fobbed off with the smattered education of a painted sepulchre, that I should fail so dolor-

ously to comprehend what was plain as a turnpike-staff to the veriest British babe and suckling!

However, on observing more closely, I discovered that most of the grown-up adults present had books containing the translation of all the witticisms, which they secretly perused, and that the feminality were also provided with pink leaflets on which the dark outline of the plot was perspicuously inscribed.

Moreover, on casting my eyes up to the gallery, I perceived that there were overseers there armed with long canes, and that the small youths did not indulge in plaudations and hilarity except when threatened by these.

And thereupon I took heart, seeing that the proceedings were clearly veiled in an obsolete and cryptic language, and it was simply matter of rite and custom to applaud at fixed intervals, so I did at Rome as the Romans did, and was laughter holding both his sides as often as I beheld the canes in a state of agitation.

I am not unaware that it is to bring a coal from Newcastle to pronounce any critical opinion upon the ludibrious qualities of so antiquated a comedy as this, but, while I am wishful to make every allowance for its having been composed in a period of prehistoric barbarity, I would still hazard the criticism that it does not excite the simpering guffaw with the frequency of such modern standard works as *exempli gratiâ, Miss*

Brown, or *The Aunt of Charley*, to either of which I would award the palm for pure whimsicality and gawkiness.

Candour compels me to admit, however, that the conclusion of the Adelphi, in which a certain magician summoned a black-robed, steeple-hatted demon from the nether world, who, after commanding a minion to give a pickle-back to sundry grotesque personages, did castigate their ulterior portions severely with a large switch, was a striking amelioration and betterment upon the preceding scenes, and evinced that TERENCE possessed no deficiency of up-to-date facetiousness and genuine humour; though I could not but reflect—"*O, si sic omnia!*" and lament that he should have hidden his *vis comica* for so long under the stifling disguise of a *serviette*.

I am a beggar at describing the hurly-burly and most admired disorder amidst which I performed the descent of the staircase in a savage perspiration, my elbows and heels unmercifully jostled by a dense, unruly horde, and going with nose in pocket, from trepidation due to national cowardice, while the seething mob clamoured and contended for overcoats and hats around very exiguous aperture, through which bewildered custodians handed out bundles of sticks and umbrellas, in vain hope to appease such impatience. Nor did I succeed to the recovery of my hat and paraphernalia until after twenty-four and a half minutes (Greenwich time), and

"A GOLDEN-HEADED UMBRELLA, FRESH AS A ROSE."

with the labours of Hercules for the golden fleece!

For which I was minded at first to address a sharp remonstrance and claim for indemnity to some pundit in authority; but perceiving that by such fishing in troubled waters I was the gainer of a golden-headed umbrella, fresh as a rose, I decided to accept the olive branch and bury the bone of contention.

Mr Jabberjee gives his views concerning the Laureateship.

III

IT is "*selon les règles*" and *rerum naturâ* that the QUEEN'S Most Excellent Majesty, being constitutionally partial to poetry, should desire to have constant private supply from respectable tip-top genius, to be kept snug on Royal premises and ready at momentary notice to oblige with song or dirge, according as High Jinks or Dolorousness are the Court orders of the day.

But how far more satisfactory if Right Hon'ble Marquis SALISBURY, instead of arbitrarily decorating some already notorious bard with this "*cordon bleu*" and thus gilding a lily, should throw the office open to competition by public exam, and, after carefully weighing such considerations as the applicant's *res angusta domi*, the fluency of his imagination, his nationality, and so on—should award the itching palm of Fame to the poet who succeeded best in tickling his fancy!

Had some such method been adopted, the whole Indian Empire might to-day have been pleased as *Punch* by the selection of a Hindoo gentleman to do the job—for I should infallibly

have entered myself for the running. Unfortunately such unparalleled opportunity of throwing soup to Cerberus, and exhibiting colour-blindness, has been given the slip, though the door is perhaps still open (even at past eleven o'clock P.M.) for retracing the false step and web of Penelope.

For I would respectfully submit to Her Imperial Majesty that, in her duplicate capacity of Queen of England and Empress of India, she has urgent necessity for a Court Poet for each department, who would be *Arcades ambo* and two of a trade, and share the duties with their proportionate pickings.

Or, if she would be unwilling to pay the piper to such a tune, I alone would work the oracle in both Indian and Anglo-Saxon departments, and waive the annual tub of sherry for equivalent in cash down.

And, if I may make the suggestion, I would strongly advise that this question of my joint (or several) appointment should be severely taken up by London Press as matter of simple justice to India. This is without prejudice to the already appointed Laureate as a swan and singing bird of the first water. All I desire is that the Public should know of another—and, perchance, even rarer—avis, who is *nigroque simillima cygno*, and could be obtained dog cheap for a mere song or a drug in the market-place, if only there is made a National Appeal

to the Sovereign that he should be promoted to such a sinecure and *ære perennius.*

As a specimen of the authenticity of my divine flatulence, please find inclosed herewith copy of complimentary verses, written by myself on hearing of Poet AUSTIN'S selection. Indulgence is kindly requested for very hasty composition, and circumstance of being greatly harrowed and impeded at time of writing by an excruciating full-sized boil on back of neck, infuriated by collar of shirt, poulticings, and so forth.

CONGRATULATORY ODE

To Hon'ble Poet-Laureate Alfred Austin, Esq.

Hail! you full-blown tulip!
Oh! when the wheezing zephyr brought glad news
Of your judicious appointment, no hearts who did peruse,
Such a long-desiderated slice of good luck were sorry at,
To a most prolific and polacious Poet-Laureate!
For no *poeta nascitur* who is fitter
To greet Royal progeny with melodious twitter.
Seated on the resplendent cloud of official Elysium,
Far away, far away from fuliginous busy hum

You are now perched with phenomenal velocity
On vertiginous pinnacle of poetic pomposity!
Yet deign to cock thy indulgent eye at the petition
Of one consumed by corresponding ambition,
And lend the helping hand to lift, pulley-hauley,
To Parnassian Peak this poor perspiring Bengali!
Whose *ars poetica* (as per sample lyric)
Is fully competent to turn out panegyric.
What if some time to come, perhaps not distant,
You were in urgent need of Deputy-Assistant!
For two Princesses might be confined simultaneously—
Then, how to homage the pair extemporaneously?
Or with Nuptial Ode, lack-a-daisy! What a fix
If with Influenza raging like cat on hot bricks!
In such a wrong box you will please remember yours truly,
Who can do the needful satisfactorily and duly,
By an *epithalamium* (or what not) to inflame your credit
With every coronated head that will have read it!

And the *quid pro quo*, magnificent and grand
Sir!
Would be at the rate of four annas for every
stanza,
Now, thou who scale sidereal paths afar dost,
Deign from thy brilliant boots to cast the super-
fluous star-dust
Upon
The head of him
Whose fate depends
On Thee!

(*Signed*) BABOO HURRY BUNGSHO JABBERJEE.

The above was forwarded (*post-paid*) to Hon'ble AUSTIN'S official address at Poet's Corner, Westminster Abbey (opposite the Royal Aquarium), but—hoity-toity and *mirabile dictu!*—no answer has yet been vouchsafed to yours truly save the cold shoulder of contemptuous inattention!

What a pity! Well-a-day, that we should find such passions of envy and jealousy in bosom of a distinguished poet, whose lucubrated productions may (for all that is known to the present writer) be no great shakes after all, and mere food for powder!

The British public is an ardent lover of the scintillating jewellery of fair play, and so I confidently submit my claims and poetical compositions to be arbitrated by the unanimous voice of all who understand such articles.

Let us remember that it is never too late to pull down the fallen idol out of the gilded shrine in which it has established itself with the egotistical isolation of a dog with the mange !

Containing Mr Jabberjee's Impressions at The Old Masters.

IV

I HAVE the honour to report that the phantom of delight has recently recommenced to dance before me.

Miss JESSIMINA MANKLETOW, the perfumed, moony-faced daughter of the gracious and eagle-eyed goddess who presides over the select boarding establishment in which I am resident member, has of late emerged from the shell of superciliousness, and brought the beaming eye of encouragement to bear upon my diffidence and humility.

This I partly attribute to general impression—which I do not condescend to deny—that, at home, I occupy the social status of a Rajah, or some analogous kind of big native pot.

So, on a recent Saturday afternoon, she invited me to escort her and a similar young virginal lady friend, by name Miss PRISCILLA PRIMMETT, to Burlington House, Piccadilly, and, as *Prince Hamlet* appositely remarks, "Look here upon this picture and on this." Which I joyfully accepted, being head-over-heels in love with Art, and the possessor of two magnificent coloured photo-lithographs, repre-

"MISS JESSIMINA MANKLETOW.

senting a steeplechase in the act of jumping a trench, and a water-nymph in the very *décolleté* undress of "*puris naturalibus*," weltering on a rushy bed.

We proceeded thither upon the giddy summit of a Royal Oak omnibus, and on arriving in the vestibulum, were peremptorily commanded to undergo total abstinence from our umbrellas.

Being accompanied by the span-new silken affair with the golden head, which, as I have narrated *supra*, I was so lucky to obtain promiscuously after witnessing the Adelphi of the Westminster college boys, I naturally protested vehemently against such arbitrary and tyrannical regulations, urging the risk of my unprotected umbrella being feloniously abducted during unavoidable absence by some unprincipled and illegitimate claimant.

But, alack! I was confronted with the official ultimatum and *sine quâ non*, and have subsequently learnt that the cause of this self-denying ordinance is due to the uncontrollable enthusiasm of British Public for works of art, which leads them to signify approbation by puncturing innumerable orifices by dint of sticks or umbrellas in the process of pointing out tit-bits of painting, and on account of the detrimental influence on the marketable value of pictures thus distinguished by the plerophory of the *Vox Populi*.

Nevertheless, my heart was oppressed with

many misgivings at having to hand over three hostage umbrellas—one being masculine and two feminine gender—and receiving nothing in exchange but a wooden medallion of no intrinsic worth, bearing the utterly disproportionate number of over one thousand! Next, after, at Miss JESSIMINA'S bidding, having purchased a sixpenny index, we ascended the staircase, and on shelling out three shillings cash payment, were consecutively squeezed through a restricted wicket as if needles going through the eye of a camel.

I will vouchsafe to aver that my interior sensations on penetrating the first gallery were those of acute and indignant disappointment, for will it be credited that a working majority of the exhibits were second, or even third and fourth-hand mechanisms of an unparagoned dingitude, and fit only for the lumbering room?

Perhaps I shall be told that this wintry exhibition is a mere stopgap and makeshift, until a fresh supply of bright new paintings can be procured, and that it is *ultra vires* to obtain such for love or money before the merry month of May.

Still I must persist in denouncing the penny wisdom and pound foolery of the Academicals in foisting off upon the public such ancient and fish-like articles that have long ceased to be *bon ton* and in the fashion, since it is undeniable that many are over fifty years, and some several centuries behind the times!

It is to be hoped that these parsimonious Misters will soon recognise that it is not possible for modern up-to-date Art to be florescent under this retrograde and fossilized system, and be warned that such untradesmanlike goings-on will deservedly forfeit the confidence and patronage of their most fastidious customers.

Miss JESSIMINA remarked more than once that such and such a picture was not in *her* taste and she would never have chosen it personally, while Miss PRIMMETT declared that she would not have had her likeness taken by Hon'ble Sir JOSH GAINSBORO, or Misters VELASKY and VANDICK, not even if they implored her on their bended marrowbones, and that, as for a certain individual effeminately named ETTY, it was a wonderment to her how respectable people could stand in front of such brazen performances! These remarks are trivial, perhaps, but even straws will serve as cocks of the weather on occasions, and, moreover, I shall certify that the most general tone was of a critical and disapproving severity, and it was quite evident that the greater portion of the spectators could have done the job better themselves.

A certain Mister TURNER came in for the BENJAMIN'S mess of obloquy, having represented Pluto, the god of wealth, in the act of carrying off a female Proserpine, but the figures so Lilliputian, and in such a disproportionate expansion

of confused sceneries, that the elopement produced but a very paltry impression. The slipshod carelessness of this painter may be realised from the fact that in a composition styled "*Blue Lights to Warn Steamboats off Shoal Water*," the blue lights are conspicuous by their total absence, and the mistiness of the atmospherical conditions renders it difficult to distinguish either the steamers or the shoals with even tolerable accuracy!

In the ulterior room were sundry productions from Umbrian and Milanese and other schools, such being presumptively the teaching establishments over which Hon'ble REYNOLDS and TURNER and GREUZY and CO. predominated as Old Masters. But surely it is unfair, and like seething a kid in the maternal nutriment, to class such crude and hobbardyhoy performances with works by more senile hands!

Here I observed a painting to illustrate scenes in the life of an important celebrity, who was childishly represented many times over having separate adventures in the space of a few square feet, and of a Brobdingnacian bulkiness compared to his perspective surroundings.

Had this been the work of an Indian artist, native gentlemen out there would simply have smiled pitiably at such ignorance, and given him the gentle admonishment that he was only to make a fool of himself for his pains. There was also a picture of a Diptych, in two portions, with a

background of gilt, but the figure of the Diptych himself very poorly represented as an anatomy.

Where all is so so-so, and below par, it is perhaps invidious to single out any for hon'ble mention; but loyalty as a British subject obliges me to speak favourably of a concern lent by Her Majesty the QUEEN, and representing a bombastical youth engaged in a snip-snap with a meek and inoffensive schoolfellow, who supports himself on one leg, and is occupied in sheltering his nose behind his arm, until his widowed and aged mother can arrive to rescue her beloved offspring from his grave crisis.

This at least can be commended as being true to nature, as I can attest from personal experience of similar boyish loggerheads, although, owing to preserving my *sang froid*, I was generally able to remove myself with phenomenal rapidity from vicinity of shocking kicks by my truculent assailant.

Let me not omit to mention a painting of "*Polichinelle*" by a Gallic artist, which Miss PRIMMETT said was the French equivalent to *Punch*. At which, speaking loudly for instruction of bystanders, I assured them, as one familiarly connected with Hon'ble *Punch*, who regarded me as a son, such a portrait was the very antipode to his majestic lineaments, nor was it reasonable to suppose that he would allow his counterfeit presentment to be depicted in the undignified garbage of a buffoon!

I trust that I may be gratefully remembered by my Liege Lord, and that he will be gracious enough to entertain me favourably with something in the shape of prize or bonus in reward for such open testimony as the above.

I have only to add that the custodian preserved the inviolability of our umbrellas with honorable fidelity, and that we moistened the drooping clay of our internal tenements at an Aërated Tea Company with a profusion of confectionaries, for which my fair friends with amiable blandness permitted me the privilege of forking out.

In which Mr Jabberjee expresses his Opinions on Bicycling as a Pastime.

V

IN consequence of the increasing demands of the incomparable Miss JESSIMINIA upon the dancing attendance of your humble servant, I am lately become as idle as a newly painted ship, and have not drunk in the legal wisdom of the learned *Moonshees* who lecture in the hall of my Inn of Court, or opened the ponderous treatise of Hon'ble Justice BLACKSTONE or ADDISON on *Torts*, for many a blank day.

Still, as Philosopher PLATO observed, "*Nihil humani alienum a me puto*," and my time has not been actually squandered in the theft of Procrastination, but rather employed in the proper study of Mankind, and acquiring a more complete knowingness in *Ars Vivendi*.

So I think it worth to direct public attention to the dangers of a practice which threatens to develop into an epidemical kind of plague, and carry the deteriorating trails of a serpent over our household families, unless promptly scotched by benevolent firmness of a paternal Government.

Need I explain I am alluding to the nowaday

passion for propelling oneself at a severe speed by dint of unstable and most precarious machinery?. It is now the exception which breaks the rule to take the air in the streets without being startled by the unseemly spectacles of go-ahead citizens straddled upon such revolutionary contrivances, threading their way with breakneck velocity under the very noses of omnibus and other horses, and ringing the shrill welkin of a tintinnabulating gong!

Nay, even after the Curfew has taken its toll from the knell of parting day, and darkness reigns supreme, they will urge on their wild career, illuminated by the dim religious light of a small oil lamp!

I possess no knack of medical knowledge, but I boldly state my opinion that such daredevilry must necessarily inflict a deleterious result to the nervous organisms of these riders; and, who knows, of their posterity?

For no one can expect to have hairbreadth escapes from the running gauntlet continuously, without suffering a shattering internal panic, while catastrophes of fatal injury to life and limb have become *de rigueur*.

Experto crede—for I can support my *obiter dictum* by the crushing weight of personal experience. A few mornings since I had the honour to escort Miss JESSIMINA MANKLETOW and a middle-aged select female boarder into the interior of Hyde Park. The day was fine,

though frigid, and I was wearing my fur-lined overcoat, with boots of patent Japan leather, and a Bombay gold-embroidered cap, so that I was a mould of form and the howling nob.

Picture my amazement when, as I promenaded the path beside the waters of the Serpentine lake, I beheld a wheeled cavalcade of every conceivable age, sex, and appearance; senile gaffers and baby buntings; multitudinous women, some plump as a duckling, others thin as a paper-thread; aye, and even priests in sanctimonious black and milk-white cravats, rolling swiftly upon two wheels, and all agog to dash through thick and thin!

On seeing which, the matured lady boarder did exclaim upon the difficulties of the performance, and the vast crowd that had collected to view such a *tour de force*, but I, perceiving that those seated upon the machines used no exorbitant exertions, and, indeed, appeared to be wholly engrossed in social intercourse, responded that no skill was required to circulate these bicycles, which, owing to being surrounded with air-cushions, would proceed *proprio motu* and without meandering.

Thereupon Miss MANKLETOW expressed an ardent desire to behold myself upon one of these same machines, and—as we were now close to the effigy of Hon'ble Duke of WELLINGTON disguised as an Achilles, near

which were certain *bunniahs* trafficking with bicycles—I, wishing to pleasure my fair companion, approached one of these contractors and bargained with him for the sole user of his vehicle for the space of one calendar hour, to which he consented at the *honorarium* of one rupee four annas.

But, on receiving the bicycle from his hands, I at once perceived myself under a total impossibility of achieving its ascent — for no sooner had I protruded one leg over the saddle than the foremost wheel averted itself, and the entire machine bit the dust, which afforded lively and infinite entertainment to my feminine companions.

I, however, reproached the *bunniah* for furnishing a worn-out effete affair that was not in working order or a going concern, but he, by assuring me that it was all right, cajoled me into trying once more.

So, divesting myself of my fur-lined overcoat, which I commanded a hobbardyhoy of the sweeper class to hold, I again mounted upon the saddle, while the proprietor of the machine sustained it in a position of rectitude, and then, supporting me by the superfluity of my pantaloons, he propelled me from the rear, counselling me to press my feet vigorously upon the paddles. But it all proved as the labour of Sisyphus, for the seat was of sadly insufficient dimensions and adamantine hardihood, and whenever the

"I INSTANTANEOUSLY ENDURED THE TOTAL UPSET!"

bicycle-man released his hold, I instantaneously endured the total upset!

Then again I reproved him for his *Punica fides*, informing him that I required a machine that would run with smooth progressiveness, precisely similar to those I beheld in motion around me. To which he replied that I must not expect to be able to ride *impromptu* as well as individuals who had only mastered the accomplishment by long continuity of practice and industry.

"Oh, man of wily tongue!" I addressed him. "Not thus will you bamboozle my supposed simplicity! For if the art were indeed so difficult as you pretend, how should it be acquired by so many timid and delicate feminines and mere nurselings? This machine of yours is nothing but an obsolete *hors de combat* with which it is not humanly possible to work the oracle!"

At which, waxing with indignation, he leaped upon it, and to my surprise, did easily propel it in whatsoever direction he pleased, and its motive power appeared to be similar in every respect to the rest; so, beguiled by his representations that, under his instructions, I should speedily become a *chef-d'œuvre*, I once more suffered myself to mount the machine; but whether from superabundant energy of my foot-paddling, or the alarming fact that we were upon the descent of a precipitous slope, I was

soon horrified at finding that my instructor was stripped out, and I abandoned to the lurch of my Caudine fork!

Oh, my goodness! My heart turns to water at the nude recollection of such an unparalleled predicament, for the now unrestrained bicycle *vires acquirit eundo*, and in seven-league boots! While I, wet as a clout with anxiety and perspiration, did grasp the handles like the horns of a dilemma, calling out in agonised accents to the bystanders,—"Help! I am running away with myself! Half a rupee for my life-preserver!"

But they were all as if to burst with laughter, and none had the ordinary heroism to intervene, and I with ever increasing rapidity was borne helplessly down the declivity towards the gates of Hyde Park Corner, when, by the benevolence of Providence, the anterior wheel ran under a railing, and I flew off like a tangent into the comparative security of a mud-barrow!

On my return and solicitous inquiry for my fur-lined overcoat, I had the further shock to discover that it was *solvitur ambulando*!

After such a shuddering experience and narrow squeak of my safety, I confidently appeal to the authorities to extinguish this highly dangerous and foolhardy sort of so-called amusement, or at the very least to issue paternal orders that, in future, no one shall be permitted to ride upon any bicycle possess-

ing less than three wheels, or guilty of a greater celerity than three (or four) miles per hour.

The fair Miss MANKLETOW amended this proposal by suggesting that the Public should be restricted at once to perambulators; but this is, perhaps, *majori cautelâ*, and an instance of the over-solicitude of the female intellect, for it is not feasible to treat an adult, who has assumed the *toga virilis* and tall hat, as if he was still mewling and puking in a tucker and bib.

Dealing with his Adventures at Olympia.

VI

THE dialoquial form is now become an indispensible *factotum* in periodical literature, and so, like a *brebis de Panurge*, I shall follow the fashion occasionally,—though with rather more obedience to a literary elegant style of phraseology than my predecessors in *Punch* have thought worth to practise.

Time: the other morning. Scene: the breakfast table at Porticobello House, Ladbroke Grove. Myself and other select boarders engaged in masticating fowl eggs with their concomitant bacon, while intelligently discussing topical subjects (for we carry out the poetical recipe of "Plain thinking and high living").

Miss Jessimina (*at the table-head*). The papers seem eloquent in laudation of the Sporting and Military Show at Olympia. How I should like to go if I had anyone to take me!

Mr Wylie (*stingily*). And I would be enraptured at so tip-top an opportunity, but for circumstance of being stonily broken.

[*Helps himself to the surviving fowl egg.*

Mr Cossetter (*in sepulchral tone*). Alack!

that doctorial prescriptions do nill for me such nocturnal jinks; otherwise——

[*He treats himself to a digestible pill.*

Myself (*taking a leap into the darkness and deadly breaches*). Since other gentlemen are not more obsequious in gallantry, I hereby tender myself for honour of accompanyist and *vade mecum.*

Miss Jess. (*lowering the silken curtains of her almond-like orbs*). Oh, really, PRINCE! So *very* unexpected! I must obtain the expert opinion of my Mamma.

Mistress MANKLETOW did approve the jaunt on condition of our being saddled by a select lady boarder of the name of SPINK as a *tertium quid* to play at propriety; at which I was internally disgusted, fearing she would play the old gooseberry with our *tête-à-tête.*

Having arrived at Olympia, we perambulated the bazaar prior to the commencement of the shows, and here (after parting with rs. 8 for three seats on the balcony) I did bleed more freely still, for Miss JESSIMINA expressed a passionate longing to possess my profile, snipped out of paper by the scissors of a Silhouette, for which I mulcted one shilling sterling.

And, after all, although it proved the *alter ego* and speaking likeness of my embossed Bombay cap and golden spectacles, she found the fault that it rendered my complexion of a too excessive murksomeness; not reflecting (with feminine

imperceptivity) that, the material being black as a Stygian, this criticism applied to the portraitures of all alike!

Farther on I presented her and the female gooseberry with a pocket-handkerchief a-piece, interwoven by a mechanism with their baptismal appellation (another rupee!).

Then we arrived at a cage containing an automatic Devil revealing the future for a penny in the slit, and Miss JESSIMINA worked the oracle with a coin advanced by myself, and the demon, after flashing his optics and consulting sundry playing-cards, did presently produce a small paper which she opened eagerly.

Miss Jess. (*after perusal*). Only fancy! It says I'm "to marry a dark man, and go for a long journey, and be very rich." What ridiculous nonsense! do you not think so, PRINCE?

Myself (*with a tender sauciness*). Poet SHAKSPEARE asserts there are more things in Heaven and earth than the Horatian philosophy. I am not a superstitious—and yet this mechanical demon may have seen correctly through the brick wall of Futurity. Have you not a worshipful adorer who might be described as dark, and to whose native land it is a long journey?

Miss Jess. (*with the complexion of a tomato*). It's time we took our seats for the performance. And you are not to be a silly!

It is notorious that the English female

vocabulary contains no more caressing and flattering epithet than this of "a silly," so that I repaired to my seat immoderately encouraged by such gracious appreciation.

Of the show, I can testify that it was truly magnificent, though the introductory portion was somewhat spoilt by the too great prevalence of the bicycle, which is daily increasing its ubiquity, nor do I see the rationality of engaging a *sais* in topped boots to attend upon each machine, under the transparent pretentiousness of its belonging to the equine genus, since it can never become the similitude of a horse in mettlesome vivacity.

My companions marvelled greatly at the severe curvature of the extremities of the cycle-track, which were shaped like the interior of a huge bowl, and while I was demonstrating to them how, from scientific considerations and owing to the centrifugal forces of gravitation, it was not possible for any rider to become a loser of his equilibrium—lo and behold! two of the competitors made the *facilis descensus*, and were intermingled in the weltering hotchpot of a calamity.

But on being disentangled they did limp away, and it is allowable to hope that they suffered no serious dismantling of their vital organs. Still, I cannot approve of these bicycle contentions, which are veritable provocative flights at the providential features.

After the termination I conducted my *protégées* to the Palmarium, where we sat under a shrub imbibing lemon crushes, brought by a neat-handed Phyllis in the uniform of a housemaid intermixed with a hospital nurse.

Here occurred a most discomposing *contretemps*, for presently Miss JESSIMINA uttered the complaint that two strangers were regarding herself and Miss SPINK with the brazen eyes of a sheep, and even making personal comments on my nationality, which rendered me like toad under a harrow with burning indignation.

At length, being utterly beside myself with rage, I summoned one of the Phyllises and requested her to take steps to abate the nuisance, being met with a smiling "*Nolo Episcopari.*" So, entreating my companions not to give way to panic and leave their cause in my hands, I went in search of a policeman.

Unfortunately some time flew before I could find one at liberty to understand my crucial position, nor could I obtain from him a legal opinion as to whether I could administer a cuff or a slap in the ear to my insulters without incurring risk of retaliation in kind.

And, on returning to the spot with a large, stout constable, I had the mortification to discover that the two impolite strangers had departed, and that Misses MANKLETOW and SPINK were similarly imperceptible.

However, after prolonged search and mental

"WITH A LARGE, STOUT CONSTABLE."

anxiety, I returned alone, and was rewarded by finding my fair friends arrived in safety; and hearing that the two strangers had explained, in the gentlemanly terms of an apology, that they had mistaken them for acquaintances.

Consequently I am thankful that I did not execute my design of assault and battery, more especially as I am the happy receiver of many handsome compliments on all sides upon the tactfulness and *savoir faire* with which I extricated myself from my shocking fix.

At which my countenance beams with the shiny resplendency of self-satisfaction.

How Mr Jabberjee risked a Sprat to capture something very like a Whale.

VII

I AM this week to narrate an unprecedented stroke of bad luck occurring to the present writer. The incipience of the affair was the addressing of a humble petition to the indulgent ear of Hon'ble *Punch*, calling attention to the great copiousness of my literary out-put, and the ardent longing I experienced to behold the colour of money on account. On which, by returning post, my parched soul was reinvigorated by the refreshing draught of a *draft* (if I may be permitted the rather facetious *jeu de mots*) payable to my order.

So uplifted by pride at finding the insignificant crumbs I had cast upon the journalistic waters return to me after numerous days in the improved form of loaves and fishes, I wended my footsteps to the bank on which my cheque was drafted, and requested the bankers behind the counter to honour it with the equivalent in filthy lucres, which they did with obsequious alacrity.

After closely inspecting the notes to satisfy myself that I had not been imposed upon by meretricious counterfeits, I emerged with a

"WAS ACCOSTED BY A POLITE, AGREEABLE STRANGER."

beaming and joyful countenance, stowing the needful away carefully in an interior pocket, and, on descending the bank step, was accosted by a polite, agreeable stranger, who, begging my pardon with profusion, inquired whether he had not had the honour of voyaging from India with me in the—the—for his life he could not recall the name of the ship—he should forget his own name presently!

"Indeed," I answered him, "I cannot remember having the felicity of an encounter with you upon the *Kaisar-i-Hind*."

The Stranger: "To be sure; that *was* the name! A truly magnificent vessel! I forget names—but faces, never! And yours I remember from the striking resemblance to my dear friend, the Maharajah of Bahanapúr—you know him?—a very elegant young, handsome chap. A splendid *Shikarri!* I was often on the verge of asking if you were related; but being then but a second-class passenger, and under an impecunious cloud, did not dare to take the liberty. Now, being on the bed of clover owing to decease of wealthy uncle, I can address you without the mortifying fear of misconstruction."

So, in return, I, without absolutely claiming consanguinity with the Maharajah (of whom, indeed, I had never heard), did inform him that I, too, was munching the slice of luck, having just drawn the princely instalment of a salary

for jots and tittles contributed to periodical *Punch*. Whereat he warmly congratulated me, expressing high appreciation of my articles and abilities, but exclaiming at the miserable paucity of my *honorarium*, saying he was thick as a thief with the Editor, and would leave no stone unturned to procure me a greater adequacy of remuneration for writings that were dirt cheap at a Jew's eye.

And presently he invited me to accompany him to a respectable sort of tavern, and solicited the honour of my having a "peg" at his expense; to which I, perceiving him to be a good-natured, simple fellow, inflated by sudden prosperity, consented, accepting, contrary to my normal habitude, his offer of a brandy panee, or an old Tom.

While we were discoursing of India (concerning which I found that, like most globular trotters, he had not been long enough in the country to be accurately informed), enters a third party, who, it so happened, was an early acquaintance of my companion, though separated by the old lang sign of a longinquity. What followed I shall render in a dialogue form.

The Third party: Why, TOMKINS, you have a prosperous appearance, TOMKINS. When last met, you suffered from the impecuniosity of a churched mouse. Have you made your fortune, TOMKINS?

Mr Tomkins. I am too easy a goer, and there

are too many rogues in the world, that I should ever make my own fortune, JOHNSON! Happily for me, an opulent and ancient avuncular relative has lately departed to reside with the morning stars, and left me wealth outside the dream of an avaricious!

Mr Johnson (*enviously*). God bless my soul! Some folks have the good luck. (*To me, whispering.*) A poor ninny-hammer sort of chap, he will soon throw it away on drakes and ducks! (*Aloud, to* Mr TOMKINS.) Splendid! I congratulate you sincerely.

Mr T. (*in a tone of dolesomeness*). The heart knoweth where the shoe pinches it, JOHNSON. My lot is not a rose-bed. For my antique and eccentric relative must needs insert a testamentary condition commanding me to forfeit the inheritance, unless, within three calendered months from his last obsequies, I shall have distributed ten thousand pounds amongst young deserving foreigners. To-morrow time is up, and I have still a thousand pounds to give away! But how to discover genuine young deserving foreigners in so short a space? Truly, I go in fear of losing the whole!

Mr J. Let me act as your *budli* in this and distribute the remaining thousand.

Mr T. From what I remember of you as a youth, I cannot wholly rely on your discretion. Rather would I place my confidence in this gentleman.

[*Indicating myself, who turned orange with pleasure.*

Mr J. Indeed? And how know you that he may not adhere to the entire thousand?

Mr T. And if he does, it is no matter, if he is a genuine deserving. I can give the whole to him if I am so minded, and he need not give away a penny of it unless inclined.

[*At which I was fit to dance with delight.*

Mr J. I deny that you possess the power, seeing that he is a British subject, and as such cannot be styled a "foreigner."

Mr T. There you have mooted a knotty point indeed. Alas, that we have no forensic big-wig here to decide it!

Myself (*modestly*). As a native poor student of English law, I venture to think that, by dint of my legal attainments, I shall be enabled to crack the Gordian nut. I am distinctly of opinion that an individual born of dusky parents in a tropical climate *is* a foreigner, in the eye of British prejudice, and within the meaning of the testator. [*And here I maintained my assertion by a logomachy of such brilliancy and erudition that I completely convinced the minds of both auditors.*

Mr J. (*grumblingly, to* Mr TOMKINS). Assuming he is correct, why favour *him* more than *me?*

Mr T. Because instinct informs me that a gentleman with such a face as his—however

dusky—may be trusted, and with the untold gold!

Mr J. (*jealously*). And I am not to be trusted! If you were to hand me your *porte-monnaie* now, full of notes and gold, and let me walk into the street with it, do you doubt that I should return? Speak, TOMKINS!

Mr T. Assuredly not; but so, too, would this gentleman. (*To me, as* Mr JOHNSON *sneered a doubt.*) Here, you, Sir, take this *portemonnaie* out into the street for five minutes or sò, I trust to your honour to return it intact. (*After I had emerged triumphantly from this severe ordeal of my* bonâ fide.) Aha, JOHNSON! am I the judge of men or not?

Mr J. (*still seeking, as I could see, to undermine me in his friend's favour*). Pish! Who would steal a paltry £50 and lose £1000? If I had so much to give away, I should wish to be sure that the party I was about to endow had corresponding confidence in *me*. Now, though I have always considered you as a dull, I know you to be strictly honest, and would trust you with all I possess. In proof of which, take these two golden sovereigns and few shillings outside. Stay away as long as you desire. You will return, I know you well!

Myself (*penetrating this shallow artifice, and hoisting the engine-driver on his own petard*). Who would not risk a paltry £2 to gain £1000? Oh, a magnificent confidence, truly!

Mr J. (*to me*). Have you the ordinary manly pluck to act likewise? If you are expecting him to trust you with the pot of money, he has a right to expect to be trusted in return. That is logic!

Mr T. (*mildly*). No, JOHNSON, you are too hasty, JOHNSON. The cases are different. I can understand the gentleman's very natural hesitation. I do not ask him to show his confidence in me—enough that I feel I can trust *him*. If he doubts my honesty, I shall think no worse of him; whichever way I decide eventually.

[*Here, terrified lest by hesitation I had wounded him at his quick, and lest, after all, he should decide to entrust the thousand pounds to* Mr JOHNSON, *I hastily produced all the specie and bullion I had upon me, including a valuable large golden chronometer and chain of best English make, and besought him to go into the outer air for a while with them, which, after repeated refusals, he at last consented to do, leaving* Myself *and* Mr JOHNSON *to wait.*

Mr J. (*after tedious lapse of ten minutes*). Strange! I expected him back before this. But he is an absent-minded, chuckle-headed chap. Very likely he is staring at a down-fallen horse and has forgotten this affair. I had better go in search of him. What? you will

come, too. Capital! Then if you go to the right, and I to the left, we cannot miss him!

But, alack! we did; and, in a short time, both Misters were invisible to the nude eye, nor have I heard from them since. Certain of my fellow-boarders, on hearing the matter, declared that I had been diddled by a bamboozle-trick; but it is egregiously absurd that my puissance in knowledge of the world should have been so much at fault; and, moreover, why should one who had succeeded to vast riches seek to rob me of my paltry possessions? It is much more probable that they are still diligently seeking for me, having omitted, owing to hurry of moment, to ascertain my name and address; and I hereby request Mr TOMKINS, on reading this, to forward the thousand pounds (or so much thereof as in his munificent generosity he may deem sufficient) to me at Porticobello House, Ladbroke Grove, W., or care of his friend, the Editor of *Punch*, by whom it will (I am sure) be honourably handed over intact.

Nor need Mr TOMKINS fear my reproaches for his dilatoriness, for there is a somewhat musty proverb that "Procrastination is preferable to Neverness."

How Mr Jabberjee delivered an Oration at a Ladies' Debating Club.

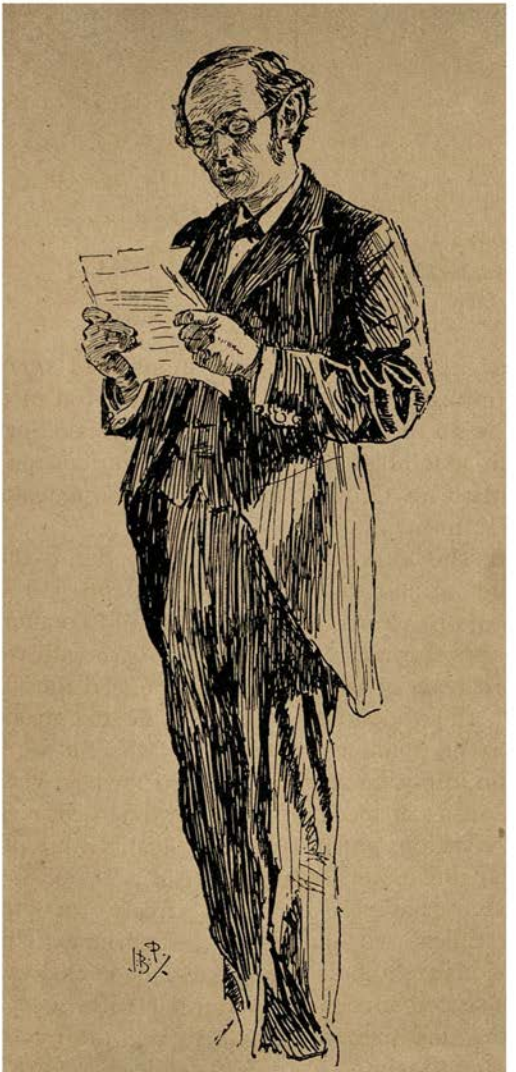
VIII

MISS SPINK (whom I have mentioned *supra* as a feminine inmate of Porticobello House) is *in additum* a member of a Debating Female Society, which assembles once a week in various private Westbourne Grove parlours, for argumentative intercourse.

So, she expressing an anxious desire that I should attend one of these conclaves, I consented, on ascertaining that I should be afforded the opportunity of parading the gab with which I have been gifted in an extemporised allocution.

On the appointed evening I directed my steps, under the guidance of the said Miss SPINK, to a certain imposing stucco residence hard by, wherein were an assortment of female women conversing with vivacious garrulity, in a delicious atmosphere of tea, coffee, and buttered bread.

After having partaken freely of these comestibles, we made the adjournment to a luxuriously upholstered parlour, circled with plush-seated chairs and adorned with countless mirrors, and there we began to beg the question at issue, to-whit, "*To what extent has Ibsen (if*



"A WEEDY, TALL MALE GENTLEMAN."

any) *contributed towards the cause of Female Emancipation?*" which was opened by a weedy, tall male gentleman, with a lofty and a shining forehead, and round, owlish spectacle-glasses. He read a very voluminous paper, from which I learnt that IBSEN was the writer of innumerable new-fangled dramas of very problematical intentions, exposing the hollow conventionalisms of all established social usages, especially in the matrimonial department.

When he had ceased there was a universal and unanimous silence, due to uncontrollable female bashfulness, for the duration of several minutes, until the chairwoman exhorted someone to have the courage of her opinions. And the ice being once fractured, one Amurath succeeded another in disjointed commentaries, plucking *crows in the teeth of the assertions of the* Hon'ble Opener and of their precursors, and resumed their seats with abrupt precipitancy, stating that they had no further remarks to make.

Then ensued another interim of golden "Silence and slow Time," as Poet KEATS says, which was as if to become Sempiternity, had not I, rushing in where the angels were in fear of slipping up, caught the Speaker in the eye, and tipped the wink of my *cacoëthes loquendi*.

To prevent disappointment, I shall report my harangue with verbose accuracy.

Myself (*assuming a perpendicular attitude*,

inserting one hand among my vest buttons, and waving the other with a graceful affability). "HON'BLE MISS CHAIRWOMAN, MADAMS, MISSES, AND HON'BLE MISTER OPENER, the humble individual now palpitating on his limbs before you is a denizen from a land whose benighted, ignorant inhabitants are accustomed to treat the females of their species as small fry and fiddle faddle. Yes, Madams and Misses, in India the woman is forbidden to eat except in the severest solitude, and after her lord and master has surfeited his pangs of hunger; she may not make the briefest outdoor excursion without permission, and then solely in a covered *palkee*, or the hermetically sealed interior of a blinded carriage. (*Cries of 'Shame.'*) In the Zenana, she is restricted to the occupation of puerile gossipings, or listening to apocryphal fairy tales of so scandalising an impropriety that I shrink to pollute my ears by the repetition even of the tit-bits. (*Subdued groans.*)

"Such being the case, you can imagine the astonishment and gratification I have experienced here this evening at the intelligence and forwardness manifested by so many effeminate intellects. (*A flattered rustle and prolonged simpering.*)

"The late respectable Dr BEN JOHNSON, gifted author of *Boswell's Biography* (*applause*), once rather humorously remarked, on witnessing a nautch performed by canine quadrupeds, that

—although their choreographical abilities were of but a mediocre nature—the wonderment was that they should be capable at all to execute such a hind-legged feat and *tour de force.*

"Similarly, it is to me a gaping marvel that womanish tongues should hold forth upon subjects which are naturally far outside the radius of their comprehensions.

"The subject for our discursiveness to-night is, '*To what extent has Ibsen contributed to the Cause* (*if any*) *of Female Emancipation?*' and being a total ignoramus up to date of the sheer existence of said hon'ble gentleman, I shall abstain from scratching my head over so Sphinxian a conundrum, and confine myself to knuckling to the obiter diction of sundry lady speakers.

"There was a stout full-blown matron, with grey curl-shavings and a bonnet and plumage, who declaimed her opinionated conviction that it was degrading and *infra dig.* for any woman to be treated as a doll. (*Hear, hear.*) Well, I would hatch the questionable egg of a doubt whether any rationalistic masculine could regard the speaker herself in a dollish aspect, and will assure her that in my fatherland every cultivated native gentleman would approach her with the cold shoulder of apprehensive respectfulness. (*The bonneted matron becomes ruddier than the cherry with complacency, and fans herself vigorously.*)

"Next I shall deal with the tall, meagre female near the fire-hearth, in abbreviated hair and a nose-pinch, who set up the claim that her sex were in all essentials the equals, if not the superiors, of man. Now, without any gairish of words, I will proceed baldly to enumerate various important physical differentiations which—— (*Intervention by Hon'ble Chairwoman, reminding me that these were not in disputation.*) I bow to correction, and kiss the rod by summing up the gist of my argument, viz., that it is nonsensical idiotcy to suppose that a woman can be the equivalent of a man either in intellectual gripe, in bodily robustiousness, or in physical courage. Of the last, I shall afford an unanswerable proof from my own person. It is notorious, *urbi et orbi*, that every feminine person will flee in panicstricken dismay from the approach of the smallest mouse.

"I am a Bengali, and, as such, profusely endowed with the fugacious instinct, and yet, shall I quake in appalling consternation if a mouse is to invade my vicinity?

"Certainly I shall not; and why? Because, though not racially a temerarious, I nevertheless appertain to the masculine sex, and consequentially my heart is not capable of contracting at the mere aspect of a rodent. This is not to blow the triumphant trumpet of sexual superiority, but to prove a simple undenied fact by dint of an *a fortiori*.

"Having pulverised my pinched-nose predecessor, I pass on to a speaker of a very very opposite personality — the well-proportioned, beauteous maiden with azure starry eyes, gilded hair, and teeth like the seeds of a pomegranate. (oh, *si sic omnes!*), who vaunted, in the musical accents of a cuckoo, her right to work out her own life, independently of masculine companionship or assistance, and declared that the saccharine element of courtship and connubiality was but the exploded mask of man's tyrannical selfishness.

"Had such shocking sentiments been aired by some of the other lady orators in this room, I must facetiously have recalled them to a certain fabular fox which criticised the unattainable grapes as too immature to merit mastication; but the particular speaker cannot justly be said to be on all fours with such an animal. Understand, please, I am no prejudiced, narrow-minded chap. I would freely and generously permit plainfaced, antiquated, unmarriageable madams and misses to undertake the manufacture of their own careers *ad nauseam;* but when I behold a maiden of such excessive pulchritude——(*Second intervention by Hon'ble Chairwoman desiring me to abstain from personal references.*) I assure the Hon'ble Miss CHAIRWOMAN that I was not alluding to herself, but since she has spoken in my wheel with such severity, I will conclude with my peroration on the subject for debate,

namely, the theatrical dramas of Hon'ble IBSEN. When, Madams and Misses, I make the odious comparison of these works, with which I am completely unacquainted, to the productions of Poet SHAKSPEARE, where I may boast the familiarity that is a breeder of contempt, I find that, in *Hamlet's* own words, it is the 'Criterion of a Satire,' and I shall assert the unalterable *a priori* of my belief that the melodious Swan of Stony Stratford, whether judged by his longitude, his versical blankness, or the profoundity of his attainments in Chronology, Theology, Phrenology, Palmistry, Metallurgy, Zoography, Nosology, Chiropody, or the Musical Glasses, has outnumbered every subsequent contemporary and succumbed them all!"

With this, I sat down, leaving my audience as *sotto voce* as fishes with admiration and amazement at the facundity of my eloquence, and should indubitably have been the recipient of innumerable felicitations but for the fact that Miss SPINK, suddenly experiencing sensations of insalubriousness, requested me, without delay, to conduct her from the assemblage.

I would willingly make a repetition of my visit and rhetorical triumphs, only Miss SPINK informs me that she has recently terminated her membership with the above society.

How he saw the practice of the University Crews, and what he thought of it.

IX

THE notorious Intercollegian Boat-race of this *anno Domini* will be obsolete and *ex post facto* by the time of publication of the present instalment of jots and tittles, still I am sufficiently presumptive to think that the cogitations and personal experiences of a cultivated, thoughtful native gentleman on this cœrulean topic may not be found so stale and dry as the remainder of a biscuit.

First I will make a clean bosom with the confession that, though ardently desirous to witness such a Titianic struggle for the *cordon bleu* of old Father Antic the Thames, I was not the actual spectator of the affair, being previously contracted to escort Miss MANKLETOW (whose wishfulness is equivalent to legislation) to a theatrical matutinal performance, which she would in nowise consent to renounce, alleging that she had already seen the Boat-race to the verge of satiety, and that the spectacle was instantaneous and paltry.

However, on acquainting my kind and patronising father, Hon'ble *Punch*, of my disappoint-

ment, he did benevolently propose, as a *pis aller* and blind bargain, a voyage in the steam launch-boat of the official coachman of one of the crews so that I might ascertain how the trick was done.

And at 10 A.M. on the day of assignation I presented myself at the riparian premises of a certain Boating Society, and, on exhibiting my letter of credit to the Mentor or Corypheus aforesaid, was received *à bras ouverts* and with an urbane offhandedness.

After I had hung fire and cooled my heels on the banks for a while, I was instructed to enter a skiff, which conveyed me and others to a steamship of very meagre dimensions, whereupon owing to the heel of one of my Japan leather shoes becoming implicated in the wire railing that circumvented the desk, I was embarked in a horizontal attitude, and severely deteriorated the tall chimneypot hat which I had assumed to do credit to the hon'ble periodical I represented. (*Nota bene.* Hatmaker's bill for renovating same, 2 rupees 8 annas—which those to whom it is of concern will please attend to and refund.)

On recovery of my head-gear and equanimity, I stationed myself in close proximity to the officiating coach for purpose of being on the threshold of inquiries, and proceeded to pop numerous questions to my neighbours. I ascertained, among other things, that the vessels are

called "eights," owing to their containing nine passengers; that the ninth is called the "cock," and is a mere supernumerary or understudent, in case any member of the crew should be overcome by sickishness during the contest and desire to discontinue.

It appears that the race is of religious and ceremonious origin, for only "good men" are permitted to compete, and none who is a wine drunkard, a gluttonous, or addicted to any form of tobacco. Moreover, they are to observe a strict fast and abstinence for many weeks previous to the ordeal. The most prominent ecclesiastics and Judges of the Supreme Courts are usually chosen from this class of individuals, which is a further proof of the sanctimoniousness attached to the competition.

Consequently I was the more surprised at the disrespectful superciliousness of their *Fidus Achates* or dry nurse, who, stretching himself upon his stomach in the prow, did shout counsels of perfection at his receding pupils.

Such criticisms as I overheard, seemed to me of a very puerile and captious description, and some of an opprobrious personality, *e.g.*, as when a certain oarman was taunted with being short —as though he were capable of adding the cubic inch to his stature!

Another I heard advised to keep his visual organs in the interior of the boat, though, being

ordinary optics and not at all of a vitreous composition, they could not be removable by volition. Again, a third was reproached because of the lateness with which he had made his beginning; but, as it was not asserted that he was inferior to the rest, the tardiness of his initiation was surely rather honourable than disgraceful!

I observed that said trainer did stickle almost prudishly for propriety, being greatly shocked at the levity with which the rowers were attired and entreating them to keep their buttons well up, though indeed I could discern none, nor was there much which was humanly possible to be buttoned.

For myself, I must make the humble complaint that the Hon'ble Coach was defective in courteous attention to my inquisitiveness, which he totally ignored. For I could not prevail upon him to explain what thing it was that he directed the oarmen to "wait for," to "spring at from a stretcher," and "catch at the beginning;" nor why they were forbidden to row with their hands, not being quadrumanous, and able to employ their feet in such a manner; nor whether when he commanded them to "get in at once," he intended them to leap into the waters or to return to the landing-place, nor why they did neither of these things; nor why he should express satisfaction that a certain rower had got rid of a lofty feather, which

would indubitably have added to the showiness of his appearance.

Again, hearing him anxiously inquire the time after a stoppage, I was proceeding to explain how gladly I would have given him such information, but for the unavoidable absence of my golden chronometer, owing to the failure of Misters TOMKINS and JOHNSON to restore the same, whereupon he treated me in such a "please - go - away - and - die" sort of style that I subsided with utmost alacrity.

On the return voyage the Collegiate eight was challenged to a spurting match by a scratched crew, which appeared to me to be the superior in velocity, though it seemed it was then too late to make the happy exchange.

When the practice was at an end and the Blues in a state of quiescence, I intimated my desire to harangue them and express my wonderment and admiration at beholding them content to suffer such hardships and perils and fault-finding without expostulation or excuses for their shortcomings, and all for no pecuniary recompense, but the evasive reward of a *nominis umbra.* And I would have reminded them of the extended popularity of their performance, and that it was an unfairness to muzzle the ox that treadeth upon one's corn, appealing to them to stand up for their rights, and refuse to com-

pete except for the honorarium of a *quid pro quo*.

But the official instructor, seeing me about to climb upon the poop, to deliver my oration, entreated me with so much earnestness to desist that I became immediately aphonous.

Mr Jaberjee is taken to see a Glove-Fight.

X

A YOUNG sprightly Londoner acquaintance of mine, who is a member of a Sportish Club where exhibitions of fisticuffs are periodically given, did generously invite me on a recent Monday evening to be the eye-witness of this gladiatorial spectacle.

And, though not constitutionally bellicose, I eagerly accepted his invitation on being assured that I should not be requisitioned to take part personally in such pugilistic exercises, and should observe same from a safe distance and coign of vantage, for I am sufficiently a lover of sportfulness to appreciate highly the sight of courage and science in third parties.

So he conducted me to the Club-house, and by the open sesame of a ticket enabled me to penetrate the barrier, after which I followed his wake downstairs, through rooms full of smoking and conversing sportlovers mostly in festal attire, to a long and lofty hall with balconies and a stage at the further end with foliage painted in imitation of a forest, which was tenanted by press reporters.

The centre of the hall was monopolised by a white square platform confined by a circum-

ambience of rope, which I was informed was the veritable theatre of war and cockpit.

Presently two hobbardyhoys made the ascent of this platform with their attendant myrmidons, and did proceed to remove their trouserings and coats until they were in the state of nature with the exception of a loincloth, whereupon the President or Master of the Ceremonies introduced them and their respective partisans by name to the assemblage, stating their precise ponderability, and that these juvenile antagonists were fraternally related by ties of brotherhood.

At which I was revolted, for it is against nature and *contra bonos mores* that relations should be egged on into family jars, nor can such proceedings tend to promote the happiness and domesticity of their home circle. However, on such occasion when the youths were in danger of inflicting corporal injuries upon each other, the President called out "Time" in such reproving tones that they hung their heads in shamefulness and desisted. And at length they were persuaded into a pacification, and made the *amende honorable* by shaking each other by the hand, whereat I was rejoiced, for, as Poet WATT says, "Birds which are in little nests should refrain from falling out."

The victory was adjudged to the elder brother —in obedience, I suppose, to the rule of Primogeniture, for he did not succeed in reducing his opponent to a *hors de combat.*

Next came a more bustling encounter between Misters BILL HUSBAND and MYSTERIOUS SMITH, which was protracted to the duration of eight rounds. I was largely under the impression that Mister HUSBAND was to win, owing to the acclamations he received, and the excessive agility with which he removed his head from vicinity of the blows of Mister MYSTERIOUS SMITH.

It was truly magnificent to see how they did embrace each other by the neck, and the wonderment and suspicion in their glances when one discovered that he was resting his chin upon the padded hand of his adversary, and from time to time the Hon'ble Chairman was heard ordering them to "break away," and "not to hold," or requesting us to refrain from any remarks. And at intervals they retired to sit upon chairs in opposing corners, where they rinsed their mouths, and were severely fanned by their bearers, who agitated a large towel after the manner of a punkah. But, in the end, it was Mysterious Mister SMITH who hit the right nail on the head, and was declared the conquering hero, though once more I was incapacitated to discover in what precise respects he was the *facile princeps.*

Around the hall there were placards announcing that smoking was respectfully prohibited, and the President did repeatedly entreat members of the audience to refrain from blowing a

cloud, assuring them that the perfume of tobacco was noxious and disgustful to the combatants, and threatening to mention disobedient tobacconists by name.

Whereupon most did desist; but some, secreting their cigars in the hollow of their hands, took whiffs by stealth, and blushed to find it fame; while others, who were such grandees and big pots that their own convenience was the first and foremost desideratum, continued to smoke with lordliness and indifference.

And I am an approver of such conduct—for it is unreasonable that a well-bred, genteel sort of individual should make the total sacrifice of a cigar, for which he has perhaps paid as much as two or even four annas, out of consideration for insignificant common chaps hired to engage in snipsnaps for his entertainment.

The last competition was to be the *bonne bouche* and *pièce de résistance* of the evening, consisting of a rumpus in twenty rounds between Misters TOM TRACY of Australia, and TOMMY WILLIAMS, from the same hemisphere, at which I was on the tiptoe of expectation.

But, although they commenced with dancing activity, one of the TOMS in the very first round sparred the other under the chin with such superabundant energy that he immediately became a recumbent for a lengthy period, and, on being elevated to a chair, only recaptured sufficient consciousness to abandon the sponge.

And then, to my chapfallen disappointment, the Chairman announced that he was very sorry and could not help it, but that was the concluding box of the evening.

I will reluctantly confess that, on the whole, I found the proceedings lacking in sensationality, since they were of very limited duration, and totally devoid of bloodshed, or any danger to the life and limb of the performers. For it is not reasonably possible for a combatant to make a palpable hit when his hands are, as it were, muzzled, being cabined, cribbed, and confined in padded soft gloves. I am not a squeamish in such cases, and I must respectfully submit that the Cause of True Sport can only be hampered by such nursery and puerile restrictions, for none can expect to compound an omelette without the fracture of eggs.

Upon remarking as above to my young lively friend, he assured me that even a gloved hand was competent to produce facial disfigurement and tap the vital fluid, and offered to demonstrate the truth of his statement if I would be the partaker with him in a glove-box.

But, though doubting the authenticity of his assertions, I thought it prudential to decline the proof of the pudding, and so took a precipitate leave of him with profuse thanks for his unparagoned kindness, and many promises to put on the gloves with him at the first convenient opportunity.

Mr Jabberjee finds himself in a position of extreme delicacy.

XI

IT is an indubitable fact that the discovery of steam is the most marvellous invention of the century. For had it been predicted beforehand that innumerable millions of human beings would be transported with security at a headlong speed for hundreds of miles along a ferruginous track, the most temporary deviation from which would produce the inevitable cataclysm and no end of a smash, the working majority would have expressed their candid opinion of such rhodomontade by cocking the contemptuous snook of incredulity.

And yet it is now the highly accomplished fact and matter of course!

Still, I shall venture to express the opinion that the pleasurability of such railway journeys is largely dependent upon the person who may be our travelling companion, and that some of the companies are not quite careful enough in the exclusion of undesirable fellow-passengers. In proof of which I now beg to submit an exemplary instance from personal experience.

I was recently the payer of a ceremonial visit to a friend of my boyhood, namely, BABOO

"A BEAMING SIMPER OF INDESCRIBABLE SUAVITY."

CHUCKERBUTTY RAM, with whom, finding him at home in his lodgings in a distant suburb, I did hold politely affectionate intercourse for the space of two hours, and then departed, as I had come, by train, and the sole occupant of a second-class dual compartment divided by a low partition.

At the next station the adjoining compartment was suddenly invaded by a portly female of the matronly type, with a rubicund countenance and a bonnet in a dismantled and lopsided condition, who was bundled through the doorway by the impetuosity of a porter, and occupied a seat in immediate opposition to myself.

When the train resumed its motion, I observed that she was contemplating me with a beaming simper of indescribable suavity, and though she was of an unornamental exterior and many years my superior, I constrained myself from motives of merest politeness to do some simperings in return, since only a churlish would grudge such an economical and inexpensive civility.

But whether she was of an unusually ardent temperament, or whether, against my volition, I had invested my simper with an irresistible winsomeness, I cannot tell ; but she fell to making nods and becks and wreathed smiles which reduced me to crimsoned sheepishness, and the necessity of looking earnestly out of window at vacancy.

At this she entreated me passionately not to

be unkind, inviting me to cross to the next compartment and seat myself by her side; but I did nill this invitation politely, urging that Company's bye-laws countermanded the placing of boots upon the seat-cushions, and my utter inability to pose as a *Romeo* to scale the barrier.

Whereupon to my lively horror and amazement, she did exclaim, "Then I will come to *you*, darling!" and commenced to scramble precipitately towards me over the partition!

At which I was in the blue funk, perceiving the *arcanum* of her design to embrace me, and resolved to leave no stone unturned for the preservation of my bacon. So, at the moment she made the entrance into my compartment, I did simultaneously hop the twig into the next, and she followed in pursuit, and I once more achieved the return with inconceivable agility.

Then, as we were both, like *Hamlet*, fat and short of breath, I addressed her gaspingly across the barrier, assuring her that it was as if to milk the ram to set her bonnet at a poor young native chap who regarded her with nothing but platonical esteem, and advising her to sit down for the recovery of her wind.

But alack! this speech only operated to inspire her with *spretæ injuria formæ*, and flourishing a large stalwart umbrella, she exclaimed that she would teach me how to insult a lady.

After that she came floundering once again over the partition, and guarding my loins, I leapt into the next compartment, seeing the affair had become a *sauve qui peut*, and devil take the hindmost: and at the nick of time, when she was about to descend like a wolf on a fold, I most fortunately perceived a bell-handle provided for such pressing emergencies and rung it with such unparalleled energy, that the train immediately became stationary.

Then, as my female persecutress alighted on the floor of the compartment in the limp condition of a collapse, I stepped across to my original seat, and endeavoured to look as if with withers unwrung. Presently the Guard appeared, and what followed I can best render in the dramatical form of a dialogue:—

The Guard (*addressing the* Elderly Female, *who is sitting smiling with vacuity beneath the bell-pull*). So it is you who have sounded the alarm! What is it all about?

The Elderly Female (*with warm indignation*). Me? I never did! I am too much of the lady. It was that young coloured gentleman in the next compartment.

[*At which the tip of my nose goes down with apprehensiveness.*

The Guard. Indeed! A likely story! How could the gentleman ring this bell from where he is?

Myself (*with mental presence*). Well said,

Mister GUARD! The thing is not humanly possible. *Rem acu tetigisti!*

The Guard. I do not understand Indian, Sir. If you have anything to say about this affair, you had better say it.

Myself (*combining discretion with magnanimousness*). As a chivalrous, I must decline to bring any accusation against a member of the weaker sex, and my tongue is hermetically sealed.

The Eld. F. It was *him* who rang the alarm, and not me. He was in this compartment, and I in that.

The Guard. What? have you been playing at Hide-and-seek together, then? But if your story is watertight, he must have rung the bell in a state of abject bodily terror, owing to your chivying him about!

The Eld. F. It is false! I have been well educated, and belong to an excellent family. I merely wanted to kiss him.

The Guard. I see what is your complaint. You have been imbibing the drop too much, and will hear of this from the Company. I must trouble you, Mam, for your correct name and address.

Myself (*after he had obtained this and was departing*). Mister Guard, I do most earnestly entreat you not to abandon me to the tender mercies of this feminine. I am not a proficeint in physical courage, and have no desire to test

the correctness of Poet POPE'S assertion, that Hell does not possess the fury of a scorned woman. I request to be conducted into a better-populated compartment.

The Guard (*with complimentary jocosity*). Ah, such young good-looking chaps as you ought to go about in a veil. Come with me, and I'll put you into a smoker-carriage. You won't be run after there!

So the incident was closed, and I did greatly compliment myself upon the sagacity and coolness of head with which I extricated myself from my pretty kettle of fish. For to have denounced myself as the real alarmist would have rendered the affair more, rather than less, discreditable to my feminine companion, and I should have been arraigned before the solemn bar of a police-court magistrate, who might even have made a Star Chamber matter of the incident.

All is well that is well over, but when you have been once bitten, you become doubly bashful. Consequently, this humble self will take care that he does not on any subsequent occasion travel alone in a railway compartment with a female woman.

Mr Jabberjee is taken by surprise.

XII

DILIGENT perusers of my lucubrations to *Punch* will remember that I have devoted sundry jots and tittles to the subject of Miss JESSIMINA MANKLETOW, and already may have concluded that I was long since up to the hilt in the tender passion. In this deduction, however, they would have manufactured a stentorian cry from an extreme paucity of wool; the actual fact being that, although percipient of the well-proportionate symmetry of her person and the ladylike liveliness of her deportment, I did never regard her except with eyes of strictly platonic philandering and calf love.

It is true that, at certain seasons, the ostentatious favours she would squander upon other young masculine boarders in my presence did reduce me to the doleful dump of despair, so that even the birds and beasts of forest shed tears at my misery, and frequently at meal-times I have sought to move her to compassion by neighing like horse, or by the incessant rolling of my visual organs; though she did only attribute such *ad misericordiam* appeals to the excessive gravity of the cheese, or the immaturity of the rhubarb pie.

But I was then a labourer under the impression that I was the odd man out of her affections, and it is well known that, to a sensitive, it is intolerable to feel that oneself is not the object of adoration, even to one to whom we may entertain but a mediocre attraction.

On a recent evening we had a *tête-à-tête* which culminated in the utter surprise. It was the occasion of our hebdomadal dancing-party at Porticobello House, and I had solicited her to become a copartner with this unassuming self in the maziness of a waltz; but, not being the carpet-knight, and consequently treading the measure with too great frequency upon the toes of my fair auxiliary, she suggested a temporary withdrawal from circulation.

To which I assenting, she conducted me to a landing whereon was a small glazed apartment, screened by hangings and furnished with a profusion of unproductive pots, which is styled the conservatory, and here we did sit upon two wicker-worked chairs, and for a while were mutually *sotto voce*.

Presently I, remarking with corner of eye the sumptuousness of her appearance, and the supercilious indifference of her demeanour, which made it seem totally improbable that she should ever, like *Desdemona*, seriously incline to treat me as an *Othello*, commenced to heave the sighs of a fire-stove, causing Miss JESSIMINA to accuse me of desiring myself in India.

I denied this with native hyperbolism, saying that I was content to remain in *statu quo* until the doom cracked, and that the conservatory was for me the equivalent of Paradise.

She replied that its similitude to Paradise would be more startling if a larger proportion of the pots had contained plants, and if such plants as there were had not fallen into such a lean and slippered stage of decrepitude, adding that she did perpetually urge her mamma to incur the expense of some geranium-blooms and a few fairy-lamps, but she had refused to run for such adornments.

And I, with spontaneous gallantry, retorted that she was justified in such parsimony, since her daughter's eyes supplied such fairy illumination, and upon her cheeks was a bloom brighter than many geraniums. But this compliment she unhappily mistook as an insinuation that her complexion was of meretricious composition, and seeing that I had put my foot into a *cul-de-sac*, I became once more the silent tomb, and exhaled sighs at intervals.

Presently she declared once more that she saw, from the dullness of my expression, that I was longing for the luxurious magnificence of my Indian palace.

Now my domestic abode, though a respectable spacious sort of residence, and containing my father, mother, married brothers, &c., together with a few antique unmarried aunts, is not at all

"I BECAME ONCE MORE THE SILENT TOMB."

of a palatial architecture; but it is a bad bird that blackens his own nest, and so I merely answered that I was now so saturated with Western civilisation, that I had lost all taste for Oriental splendours.

Next she inquired whether I did not miss the tiger-shooting and pig-sticking; and I replied (with veraciousness, since I am not the *au fait* in such sports) that I could not deny a liability to miss both tigers and pigs, and, indeed, all animals that were *ferœ naturœ*, and she condemned the hazardousness of these jungle sports, and wished me to promise that I would abstain from them on my return to India.

To this I replied that before I agreed to such a self-denying ordinance, I desired to be more convinced of the sincerity of her interest in the preservation of my humble existence.

Miss JESSIMINA asked what had she done that I should be in dubitation as to her *bona fides?*

Then I did meekly remind her of her flirtatious preferences for the young beef-witted London chaps, and her incertitude and disdainful capriciousness towards myself, who was not a beetlehead or an obtuse, but a cultivated native gentleman with high-class university degree, and an oratorical flow of language which was infallibly to land me upon the pinnacle of some tip-top judicial preferment in the Calcutta High Court of Justice.

She made the excuse that she was compelled by financial reasons to be pleasant to the male boarders, and that I could not expect any marked favouritism so long as I kept my tongue concealed inside my damask cheek like a worm in bud.

Upon which, transported by uncontrollable emotion, I ventured to embrace her, assuring her that she was the cynosure of my neighbouring eyes, and supplied the vacuum and long-felt want of my soul, and while occupied in imprinting a chaste salute upon her rosebud lips—who'd have thought it! her severe matronly parent popped in through the curtains and, surveying me with a cold and basilican eye, did demand my intentions.

Nor can I tell what I should have responded, seeing that I had acted from momentary impulsiveness and feminine encouragement, had not Miss JESSIMINA, with ready-made female wit, answered for me that it was all right, and that we were the engaged couple.

But her mother expressed an ardent desire to hear my *vivâ voce* corroboration of this statement, informing me that she was but a poor weak widow-woman, but that, if it should appear that I was merely the giddy trifler of her daughter's young, artless affections, it would be her dolesome duty to summon instantaneously every male able-bodied inmate of her establishment, and request them to inflict deserved corporal chastisement upon my person!

So, although still of a twitter with amazement at Miss JESSIMINA'S announcement, I considered it the better part of valour to corroborate it with promptitude, rather than incur the shocking punches and kicks of numerous athletic young commercials; and, upon hearing the piece of good news, Mrs MANKLETOW exploded into lachrymation, saying that she was divested of narrow-minded racial colour prejudices, and had from the first regarded me as a beloved son.

Then, blessing me, and calling me her Boy, she clasped me against her bosom, where, owing to the exuberant redundancy of her ornamental jetwork, my nose and chin received severe laceration and disfigurement, which I endured courageously, without a whimper.

When I have grown more accustomed to being the lucky dog, I shall commence cocka-hooping, and become merry as a grig. At the present moment I am only capable of wonder-ment at the unpremeditated rapidity with which such solemn concerns as betrothals are knocked off in this country.

But if, as *Macbeth* says, such jobs are to be done at all, then it is well they were done quickly.

Drawbacks and advantages of being engaged. Some Meditations in a Music-hall, together with notes of certain things that Mr Jabberjee failed to understand.

XIII

MY preceding article announced the important intelligence of my bethrothal, in which I was then too much the neophyte to express any very opinionated judgment as to the pros or cons of my approaching *benediction* as a *Benedick* (if I may be allowed a somewhat humorous pun).

L'appétit vient en mangeant, and I am blessing my stars more fervidly every day for the lucky windfall which has bolted upon me from the blue.

All the select boarders were speedily informed of my engagement, and the males though profuse in their congratulations, did manifest their green-eyed monster by sundry veiled chucklings and rib-pokings, while the ladies—especially Miss SPINK—are become less pressing in their attentions, and address me as "Prince" with increased frequency, and in a tone of tittering acidulation.

This, however, is attributable to natural dis-

appointment; for it was notorious that all of them, even the least prepossessing, were on the tiptoe of languishing expectancy that I should cast my handkerchief in one of their directions. But the feminine nature is not capable of sustaining the good-fortune of another member of their sex with good-humoured complacency!

On the other hand, I enjoy many privileges and bonuses. I am permitted to enter Mrs MANKLETOW'S private parlour *ad libitum*, and there converse with my beloved, calling her "JESSIE," and even embrace her in moderation. I may also embrace her Mother, and address her as "Mamma," which affords me raptures of a less tumultuous kind.

Moreover now, when I conduct my *inamorata* to an entertainment, it is no longer *de rigueur* for any third party to impersonate a gooseberry!

The mention of entertainments reminds me that, a few evenings ago, I escorted her to a music-hall, wherein, although I had previously believed myself a past master in the shibboleth of London Cockneyisms and technical terminology, I heard and saw much which was *au bout de mon Latin*, and the head impossible to be made out of the tail.

E.g., there were two young lady-performers alleged by the programme to be "Serios and Bone Soloists," whereas they were the reverse of lugubrious; nor were their physiognomies fleshless or osseous; but, on the contrary, so shapely

and well-favoured that JESSIE did remonstrate with me upon the perseverance with which I gazed at them.

And I could not at all find anyone to explain to me the difference between a "*Comedian*" and a "*Comic*"; or a "*Comedian and Patterer*" and an "*Eccentric Comedian*"; or a "*Society Belle*" and a "*Burlesque Artiste*"; or, again, "*A Sketch Artiste*" and a "*Speciality Dancer.*" For to me they seemed precisely similar. There were "*four Charming Lyric Sisters,*" who performed a dance in long expansive skirts, and in conclusion did all turn heels-over-head in simultaneity; but this, it seems, was—contrary to my own expectancy—*not* to dance a speciality. Speaking for my humble part, I am respectfully of opinion that lovely woman loses in queenly dignity by the abrupt execution of a somersault; however, the feat did indubitably excite vociferous applause from the spectators.

Further there appeared a couple of Duettists in ordinary evening habiliments, who sang in unison with egregious melodiousness. One was plump as a partridge; the other thin as a weasel; and they related how they were both the adorers of a certain lovely damsel called "SALLY," who was the darling of their co-operative hearts, and resided in their Alley. And of all the days in the week they loved Sunday, because then they were dressed in all their best, and went for a walk with SALLY.

"IN GARBAGE OF UNPARAGONED SHABBINESS.

I should have thought that it was not humanly feasible for SALLY to continue such periodical promenades without exhibiting some preferential kind of choice, either for the partridge or the weasel, and that such a triangular courtship and triple alliance would infallibly terminate in the apple of discord, but JESSIE did assure me that it was quite usual and the correct cheese for a girl to have more than one beau upon her string.

I made the further observation that the Comedians and Comics must be reduced to extreme pauperism, since they presented themselves before a well-dressed, respectable audience in garbage of unparagoned shabbiness, and with hair of unbrushed wildness, and needing immediate tonsure.

One songster did offer some excuse for the poverty of his appearance, telling us his hard case, how that he was occupied in declaring his passion to a beauteous damsel, when she was "all over him in a minute," and, while he was making love to the pretty stars above, she cleared out all his pockets in a minute! At which many laughed; but, though Jove is said to regard lovers' perjuries with cachinnation, I could not help feeling the most pitiable sympathy for such a disappointing conclusion to a love affair, seeing that it is impossible for the comeliest nymph who returns her admirer's devotion by stealing his purse, and similar trash, to remain

posed any longer upon the towering pedestal of an ideal. Upon making this remark to JESSIE, however, she uttered the repartee that I was the silly noodle; though she is, I am sure, notwithstanding her attachment to gewgaws, not capable of descending personally to such light-fingered tactics.

I was additionally bewildered by a chorus chanted by one of the Society Belles, which I took down *verbatim*, in the hope of a solution. It was as follows: "For I like a good liar, indeed I do! Provided he comes out with something new! But why did he tell me that story with whiskers on, why, why, why?"

Now to me it is wholly incomprehensible that the female intelligence should admire mendacity in the opposite sex on the sole conditions that the said liar should present himself in some novel article of attire, and, previously to relating his untruth, remove from his cheeks any hirsute appendages. One of the boarders whom I consulted on the subject attempted to persuade me that it was the *story* that had the whiskers; but it is nonsensical to suppose that a purely abstract affair like an untruth could be furnished with capillary growth, which belongs to the concrete department.

There was a lady described as an "incomparable Comedienne," who was the victim of unexampled bad luck. For she had purchased a camera (which she exhibited to the assembly),

and with this she had gone about photographing landscapes and other sceneries. But, lack-a-daisy! no sooner were they printed than the pictures were discovered to be irretrievably spoilt by objects in the foreground of such doubtful propriety that they were not exactly fit to place among her brick-backs, so she was compelled to keep them in a drawer among her knick-nacks!

I should have liked her to inform us where such a faulty mechanism was procured, and why she did not exchange it for one of superior competency.

She was succeeded on the stage by a little girl with a hoop, who bore a striking resemblance to her predecessor, and was probably her infantile daughter. This child was evidently of a greatly inquisitive disposition, and asked many questions of her progenitors which they were unable to answer, bidding her not to bother, and to go away and play.

Then she asked a juvenile boy (who remained invisible), called "JOHNNY JONES," and informed us that "she knew now." But I was still in the total darkness as to the answers, which even JESSIE declared that she was "*Davus non Œdipus*," and not able to provide with the correct solutions.

Upon the whole, I am of opinion that music-halls are more fertile in mental puzzlement and social problems, and more difficult of comprehension, than theatrical entertainments.

This is, no doubt, why the spectators are allowed to consume liquors and sandwiches throughout the performance, since it is well known that the brain cannot carry on its *modus operandi* with efficiency if the stomach is in the beggarly array of an empty box!

Mr Jabberjee's fellow-student. What's in a Title? An invitation to a Wedding. Mr J. as a wedding guest, with what he thought of the ceremony, and how he distinguished himself on the occasion.

XIV

THERE is a certain English young fellow-student of mine—to wit and *videlicet*, HOWARD ALLBUTT-INNETT, Esquire, with whom I have succeeded in scratching an acquaintance at sundry Law Lectures, and in the Library of my Inn of Court—a most amiable tip-top young chap, who is "the moulded glass of fashionable form," and cap-in-hand with innumerable aristocratic nobs.

Seeing that I had (at an earlier period) been a more diligent attendant and note-taker of lectures than himself, he did pay me the transcendent compliment of borrowing the loan of my note-book, which, to my grateful astonishment, he condescended to bring back personally to Porticobello House, saying that he had found my notes magnificent, and totally incomprehensible to his more limited intellect!

In *additum*, he graciously accepted my in-

vitation to ascend to the drawing-room, where I introduced him freely to several select lady boarders as my *alter ego* and *Fidus Achates.*

On taking his leave, he expressed some marvelling that I should have concealed my superior rank under the reticence of a napkin, having observed that I was addressed as "Prince" by more than one of the softer-sexed boarders.

I replied that I attached no valid importance to the *nominis umbra* of such a barren title, and that the contents of what there is nothing in must necessarily be naught.

He answered me warmly that he entirely joined issue with me in such an opinion, and that he was often affected to sickishness by the snobbery of mundane society, adding that he hoped I would give him the look up at his paternal mansion in Prince's Square, Bayswater, shortly, since his people would be overjoyed at making my acquaintance, which both enraptured and surprised me, for hitherto he had ridden the high and rough-shoed horse, and employed me to suck my brains as a cat's foot.

And odzookers! before many days I was the recipient of a silver-lettered missive, stating that Mr and Mrs LEOFRIC ALLBUTT-INNETT did request the honour of Prince JABBERJEE'S company at the marriage of their daughter, CLORINDA ISABEL, with Mr OVERTON WOOD-

"THE SPECTATORS SALUTED ME WITH SHOUTS OF JOY AS THE RETURNED SHAHZADAR."

BEIGH-SMART, at a certain sacred Bayswater edifice.

This I eagerly accepted, perceiving that my friend must have eulogised to his parents my legal accomplishments and forensic acumen.

When I did, in all my best, obey, alighting at the church in my embossed cap, shawl neckcloth, a pair of yellow glove-kids, and patented Japan shoes, the spectators saluted me with shouts of joy as the returned SHAH-ZADAR, which caused me to bow profusely, while the driver of the hansom petitioned an additional sixpence.

The interior of the church was dim and crowded with feminines, and I could only hear flutters and rustlings, together with a subdued mumble at the remoter end—which I ascertained to be the ceremony. Then followed the long stop and awkward pause, accompanied on the organ, and at length all the company stood on seats and the tiptoe of expectation, as the bridal procession moved slowly down the central passage amidst the congratulations of their friends and nearest relations.

Not being desirous to hide under a bushel, I did press myself forward, and addressing a lady whom I took to be the bride, I felicitated her loudly, wishing that she might never become a widow, or use vermilion on her grey head, and that she might wear the iron bangle, and get seven male children.

Unhappily the serene ray of my goodwill was born to blush unseen in the dark unfathomed cave of a desert ear, for the actual recipient of my compliments was an unmarried spinster relative, who had already passed the years of discretion.

Mrs ALLBUTT-INNETT welcomed me with cordial effusiveness, insisting that I should honour them by visiting their residence, and critically inspecting the nuptial gifts, to which I consented.

On my arrival, I held a lengthy colloquy with the happy bridegroom, from whom I was anxious to obtain particulars of English marriage customs, such as whether he would be required to spend the evening in having his ears pulled, and other facetious banterings by his mother-in-law and sisters-in-law, as in India.

But he seemed oppressed by so severe a bashfulness that I could extract no information from him, and presently the father of the bride came up and conducted me into an apartment wherein was a kind of bazaar, or exhibition of clocks and lamps and stationery cases and knives and forks and other trinkets and gewgaws, none of which appeared to me at all different from similar objects in shop windows.

However, the greatest admiration and wonderment were expressed by all who entered, and I found that the host was under grave apprehensiveness that the presents might be looted

by the more unscrupulous of the guests, for he pointed out to me a sharp-eyed, shy gentleman in a corner, who, he informed me, was a disguised police-officer. This, at first, I was loth to believe, but was assured that it was a necessary precaution.

Still, I will presume to point out that the simulation by a policeman of the ordinary character of a friend of the family and fellow-rejoicer, is a rather reprehensible trap to catch a sleeping weasel, since those whose honesty is not invariably above par may be lulled into the false security by his civilian get-up. And I did assure him, privately, that it was totally unnecessary to keep an eye on myself, who was a native University man with no necessity or natural taste for peculation, but that I would infallibly inform him if I should succeed at detecting any attempted dishonesty.

Later I was ushered into the refreshment-room, and partook of a pink ice, with champagne-wine and strawberries, after which I entreated leave of Mrs ALLBUTT-INNETT to deliver a nuptial oration. And she, overjoyed at my happy thought, did loudly request silence for Prince JABBERJEE, who was to utter a few very brief utterances.

So as they became all ears, I addressed them, describing how, in my native country, at such a bridal feast and blow-out, it was customary for the bridegroom's mother to eat a sevenfold

repast, for fear of a subsequently empty stomach; but the bride's mother, on the contrary, will touch nothing, feeling that the more she fasts then, the more provender will fall to her later on. And I facetiously added that, on the present occasion, I had the certainty that both the mothers might indulge their appetites *ad libitum*.

Next I recounted how, during a former boyish wedding of my own, my wife's mother after, as was befitting, setting a conical tinselled cap upon my head, and placing ten rings of twigs upon my ten fingers, and binding my hands with a weaver's shuttle, did say, "I have bound thee, and bought thee with cowries, and put a shuttle between thy fingers; now bleat then like a lamb." Whereupon I, being of a jokish disposition, did, unexpectedly and contrary to usage, cry "Baa" loudly, causing my mother-in-law to fear that I was a dull—until that night in the Zenana she had the great happiness to overhear me outwitting all the females present by the sprightliness of my badinage.

And I was proceeding, amidst vociferous cachinnation, to enumerate some of my most lively sallies, when the bride's father did take me by the arm, and drawing me aside, inform me that the young couple were just about to start for their wedding journey, and that I was urgently required to see them depart.

I observed that here, as with us, it is *de règle*

to scatter rice upon the head of the bridegroom —but neither treacle nor spices. Moreover, this complimentary shower is extended to the bride and the carriage-horses, and hurled with athletic vigorousness, while it is a point of honour to knock off the coachman's hat with a female satin slipper.

I was disappointed to see that both the happy pair had cast aside their gorgeous wedding garments, and put on quite ordinary and everyday attire, which, if not due to excessive parsimoniousness, must originate in a shame-faced desire to conceal their state of connubiality though it might be reasonably anticipated that they should rather be anxious to manifest their triumphant good-luck *pro bono publico*.

Mr Jabberjee is asked out to dinner. Unreasonable behaviour of his betrothed. His doubts concerning the social advantages of a Boarding Establishment, with some scathing remarks upon ambitious pretenders. He goes out to dinner, and meets a person of some importance.

XV

THE pleasing impression produced by this humble self upon both Mister and Mrs ALL-BUTT-INNETT at the wedding of their eldest daughter became speedily prolific of golden fruit in the request of the honour of my company for dinner at 8.15 P.M. on a subsequent evening.

Incidentally recounting this prime compliment to my lovely JESSIMINA, I was astounded that she did not share my jubilations, but was, on the contrary, the sore subject at not being included in such invitation, which, as I explained, was totally irrational, seeing that the inviters remained unaware of her nude existence. She, however, maintained that I ought to have mentioned that I was an affianced, and have refused to sit at any banquet at which she was

"SOME HAUGHTY MASCULINE MIGHT INSULT HER UNDER MY VERY NOSE."

fobbed off with a cold shoulder. This again was absurd, since the moiety of a loaf is preferable to total deprivation of the staff of life, and moreover, in my country, it is customary for the husband-elect to take his meals apart from his bride that is to be; nor does she ever touch food until he has previously assuaged his pangs of hunger. Notwithstanding, she would not be pacified until I had bestowed upon her a gold and turqoise ring of best English workmanship, as an olive-branch and calumet of peace.

But, outside Porticobello House, I have been close as wax on the subject of my flowery chains, and it was especially inconceivable that I should inform my friend HOWARD of same, since he has frequently bantered me in wonderment that a respectable Oriental magnate should reside in such a very ordinary and third-rate boarding establishment, where it was an impossibility to gain any real familiarity with smart and refined English society.

And who knows that if I should introduce Miss JESSIE into company of a superior caste, some haughty masculine might insult her under my very nose; and lack-a-daisy! where would she find a protector?

I am certainly oppressed by an increasing dubiety whether Mrs MANKLETOW is verily such an upper crustacean and *habituée* of the *beau monde* as she did represent herself to be. It is well-nigh incomprehensible that any in-

dividual should seek to appear of a higher social status than Nature has provided; but my youthful acquaintance, ALLBUTT-INNETT, Jun., Esq., informs me that this is a common failing among the English classes, who fondly imagine that nothing is needed to render a frog the exact equivalent to an ox except an increased quantity of air, forgetting that if a frog is abnormally inflated, it is apt to provide the rather ludicrous catastrophe of exploding from excessive swellishness!

However *revenons à nos moutons—id est*, the dinner party.

I intended to be the early bird at Prince's Square, but, owing to a rarity among the hansom cabs, did not arrive until most of the guests were already assembled, being welcomed with effusive hospitality by the household god and goddess, Mr and Mrs ALLBUTT-INNETT, who begged leave to present to me all the most distinguished of their friends.

Then—*pop*, and *à l'improviste*—the door was thrown open, and a butler announced *ore rotundo*, Sir CHETWYND CUMMERBUND, whom, in the wink of an eye, I recognised as an ex-Justice of the very court in Calcutta in which my male progenitor practices as a mook-tear, or attorney, and who, moreover, was familiar with myself almost *ab ovo*, having been more than once humbly presented to his notice by my said father, with a request for his patronising

opinion of my abilities, and the feasibility of my education at a London Inn of Court!

Oh, my gracious! I was as if to sink through the carpet, and sought to draw in my horns of dilemma behind a column, when, to my uncontrollable dismay, my hostess led him towards me, with the remark that he was probably already acquainted in India with His Highness Prince JABBERJEE.

The Hon'ble Retired Judge at this did merely smile indulgently, observing that India was a country of considerable extensiveness, and inquiring of me in my own tongue where my *raj* was situated, and the strength of my army, though with a scintillation in his visual organs that told me he knew me perfectly well.

And I, realising that honesty was my best policy of insurance from his displeasure, did throw myself frankly on the mercy of the Court, protesting volubly in native language that I was an industrious poor Bengali boy, and had always regarded him as my beloved father; that I was not to blame because certain foolish, ignorant persons imagined me to be some species of Rajah; and earnestly representing to him that our kind mutual hostess would be woefully distressed by any disclosures. "Let your Hon'ble Ludship," I said, "only remain hermetically sealed, and preserve this as a trade secret, and my sisters, sisters-in-law, and aunts

shall always chant hymns on the Ganges for your Honour's felicities!"

His Honour, laughing good-naturedly, did tell me that if I liked to assume the plumes of a daw, it was no affair of his, and kindly promised to respect my confidences—at which I was greatly relieved. Indeed, throughout the evening, nothing could exceed his affability, for, being seated on the other side of the hostess, opposite myself, he showed me the greatest honour and deference, frequently requesting my views on such subjects as Increased Representation of the People of India, the National Congress, and so forth; upon which, being now perfectly reassured and at my ease, I discoursed with facundity, and did loudly extol the intellectual capacity of the Bengalis, as evinced by marvellous success in passing most difficult exams., and denouncing it as a crying injustice and beastly shame that fullest political powers should not be conceded to them, and that they should not be eligible for all civil appointments *pari passu*, or even in priority to Englishmen.

Wherein his Honour did warmly agree, assuring me with fatherly benignancy of the pleasure with which he would hear of my appointment to be Head of a District somewhere on the Punjab frontier, and mentioning how a certain native Bengali gentleman of his acquaintance, Deputy-Commissioner GRISH CHUNDER DÉ,

Esq., M.A., had distinguished himself splendidly (according to the printed testimony of Hon'ble KIPLING) in such a post of danger.

I replied, that I was not passionately in love with personal danger, and that in my case *cedant arma togæ*, and my tongue was mightier than my sword, but that there was no doubt that we Bengalis were intellectually competent to govern the whole country, provided only that we were backed up from behind by a large English military force to uphold our authority, as otherwise we should soon be the pretty pickles, owing to brutal violence from Sikhs, Rajputs, Marathas, and similar uncivilised coarse races.

And Sir CHETWYND expressed his lively satisfaction that I appreciated some of the advantages of the British occupation.

Thus, through my presence of mind in boldly grappling with the nettle, I turned what might have been a disaster into a conspicuous triumph, for all the company, seeing the favour I was in with such a big wig as Hon'ble CUMMERBUND, listened to me with spell-bound enchantment, especially my friend HOWARD'S sprightly young sister, a damsel of distinguished personal attractiveness, who was seated on my other side. Her birth-name is LOUISA-GWENDOLEN; but her family and intimates, so she did inform me, call her "WEE-WEE."

Of the dinner itself I can speak highly, as

being inexpressibly superior, both in stylishness of service and for the quality of the food, etc., to any meals hitherto furnished by Mrs MANKLETOW'S mahogany board. Nevertheless, I wondered to find the ALLBUTT-INNETTS behind the times in one respect, viz., the lighting, which was with old-fashioned candles and semi-obscured lamps, instead of the more modern and infinitely more brilliant illumination of gas! Here, at least, though in other particulars of very mediocre elegance, I must pronounce Porticobello House the more up to date.

In taking leave, I did thank Hon'ble Sir CHETWYND CUMMERBUND profusely for so discreetly retaining its feline contents within the generous bag of his mouth, whereat he clapped my back very cordially, advising me to abstain for the future from a super-abundance of frills, since the character of a diligent legal native student was a precious lily that needed no princely gilding, and adding that he was indebted to me for a most entertaining and mirthful evening. This I do not understand, as I had not uttered any of the facetious puns and conceits wherewith it is my *wont*—when I *will** —to set the table in a simper.

But possibly I may have spoken rather humorously unawares, and it is proverbial that

* This is a fairly sample specimen, though I have frequently surpassed it in waggish drollery.—*H. B. J.*

these exalted legal luminaries are pleased with a rattle and tickled by a straw.

On my return I did omit to mention Miss WEE-WEE to JESSIMINA; but, after all, *cui bono?*

Mr Jabberjee makes a pilgrimage to the Shrine of Shakespeare.

XVI

I HAVE frequently spoken in the flattering terms of a eulogium concerning my extreme partiality for the writings of Hon'ble WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE. It has been remarked, with some correctness, that he did not exist for an age, but all the time; and though it is the open question whether he did not derive all his ideas from previous writers, and even whether he wrote so much as a single line of the plays which are attributed to his inspired nib, he is one of the institutions of the country, and it is the correct thing for every orthodox British subject to admire and understand him even when most incomprehensible.

Consequently I did cock-a-hoop for joy on receiving an invitation from my friend ALLBUTTINNET, Jun., Esq., on behalf of his parents, that I should accompany them on an excursion by rail to Stratford-upon-Avon, where the said poet had his domicile of origin.

And so great was my enthusiasm that, during the journey, I declaimed, *ore rotundo*, certain select passages from his works which I had

committed to memory during the salad days of my schoolboyishness, and with such effect that Miss WEE-WEE ALLBUTT-INNETT (who is excessively emotional) was compelled, at times, to veil her countenance in the recesses of a pocket-handkerchief.

Having at length arrived at that hallowed and sacred spot, the very name of which sends a sweet and responsive thrill through every educated bosom, our first proceeding was to partake of a copious cold tiffin.

This repast we ordered at an old-fashioned hostelry, whose doorway was decorated by a counterfeit presentment of the Bard, and I observed that similar effigies were placed above several of the shops as I walked along the streets. These images somewhat resemble those erected to Buddha in certain parts of India, being similarly bald, but terminating—not in crossed legs, but a cushion with tassels. However, I was not able to discover that it is the custom for even the most ignorant inhabitants to do anything in the nature of poojah before these figures any longer, though probably usual enough before CROMWELL, with the iron sides, ordered all such baubles to be removed. In a hole of the upper wall of the Town Hall there is a life-size statuary of SHAKSPEARE, with legs complete, showing that he was not actually deficient in such extremities and a mere gifted Torso: and it

is presumable that the reason why only his upper portions are generally represented is, that marble in these parts is too precious a commodity to be wasted on mere superfluities.

We visited the church, and saw his tomb, and there again was the superior half of him occupied with writing verses on a cushion in a mural niche, supported by pillars. Upon a slab below is inscribed a verse requesting that his dust should not be digged, and cursing him who should interfere with his bones, but in so mediocre a style, and of such indifferent orthography, that it is considered by some to be a sort of spurious cryptogram composed by Hon'ble BACON.

On such a *vexata quæstio* I am not to give a decided opinion, though the verse, as a literary composition, is hardly up to the level of *Hamlet*, and it would perhaps have been preferable if the poet, instead of attempting an impromptu, had looked out some suitable quotation from his earlier works. For, when an author is occupied in shuffling off his mortal coil, it is unreasonable to expect him to produce poetry that is up to the mark.

When I advanced this excuse aloud in the church, a party of Americans within hearing exclaimed, indignantly, that such irreverent levity was a scandal in a spot which was the Mecca of the entire civilised universe.

Whereupon I did protest earnestly that I

"IT WAS HERE," I SAID, REVERENTLY, "THAT THE SWAN OF AVON WAS HATCHED!"

meant no irreverence, being *nulli secundus* in respect for the *Genius Loci*, only, as a critic of English Literature, I could not help regretting that a poet gifted with every requisite for producing a satisfactory epitaph had produced a doggerel which was undeniably below his usual par.

This rendered them of an increased ferocity, until Mr ALLBUTT-INNETT good naturedly took them into a corner and whispered that I was a very wealthy young Indian Prince, of great scholastic attainments, but oppressed by an uncontrollable *naïveté*, after which they all came and shook me by the hand, saying they were very proud to have met me.

Afterwards we proceeded to the Birthplace, where a very gentlewomanly female exhibited the apartment in which the Infant Bard first saw the light. Alack! there was but little light to behold, being a shockingly low and dingy room, meagrely furnished with two chairs and a table, on which was another of the busts. As I came in, I uttered a remark which I had prepared for the occasion. "It was here," I said, reverently, "here that the Swan of Avon was hatched!" At which Miss WEE-WEE was again overcome by emotion.

The room was greatly in the necessity of whitewash, being black with smoke and signatures in lead pencil. Even the window-panes were scratched all over by diamonds, on seeing

which, and being also the possessor of a diamond and gold ring, I was about to inscribe my own name, but was prevented by the lady custodian.

I indignantly and eloquently protested that if Hon'ble Sirs, WALTER SCOTT, Lord BYRON, ISAAC WALTON, WASHINGTON IRVING and Co. were permitted to deface the glass thus, surely I, who was a graduate of Calcutta University, and a valuable contributor to London *Punch*, was equally entitled, since what was sauce for a goose was sauce for a gander, and Mrs ALLBUTT-INNETT urged that I was a distinguished Shakspearian student and Indian prince, but the custodian responded that she couldn't help that, for it was *ultra vires*, nevertheless.

However, while she was engaged in pointing out the spot where somebody's signature had been before it was peeled away, I, snatching the opportunity behind her back, did triumphantly inscribe my autograph on the bust's nose.

In the back-room they showed us where SHAKSPEARE'S father stapled his wool, which caused Mrs ALLBUTT-INNETT to remark that she had always understood that the poet was of quite humble origin, and that, for her part, she thought it was all the more creditable to him to have done what he did do.

We also inspected the Museum, and were shown SHAKSPEARE'S jug, a rather ordinary concern; the identical dial which one of the clowns in his plays drew out of a poke, and a

ring with W. S. engraved on it, found in the churchyard some years ago, and, no doubt, dropped there by the poet himself, while absorbed in the composition of his famous and world-renowned elegy.

There were several portraits of him also, all utterly unlike one another, or only agreeing in one respect, namely, their total dissimilarity from the bust.

We likewise saw the very desk SHAKSPEARE used, after creeping unwillingly to school with a shining face like a snail's. I was pained to see evidence of the mischievousness of the juvenile genius, for it was slashed and hacked to such a doleful degree as to be totally incapacitated for scholastic use!

I myself was sprightly in my youth, but never, I am proud to say, to the extent of wilfully damaging my master's furniture! Before leaving, we walked to visit the residence of SHAKSPEARE'S wife, which turned out to be a very humble thatched-roof affair, such as is commonly occupied by peasants.

But, as Mrs ALLBUTT-INNETT said, it is a sad fact that distinguished literary characters often make most imprudent marriages. Which put me in a wonderment whether she had heard anything about myself and Miss MANKLETOW.

At one of the bazaars I purchased a beautiful Shakspearian souvenir, in the form of a coloured porcelain model of SHAKSPEARE'S

birthplace, which can be rendered transparent and luminous by the insertion of a night-light.

This I had intended humbly to offer for the gracious acceptance of Miss WEE-WEE, but having thrust it into a coat-tail pocket, I unfortunately sat upon it in the train as we were returning.

So I presented it as a token of remembrance to JESSIMINA, who was transported with delight at the gift, which she said could be easily rendered the *statu quo* by dint of a little diamond cement.

Containing some intimate confidences from Mr Jabberjee, with the explanation of such apparent indiscretion.

XVII

SINCE writing my latest contribution I have folded up my tent like an Arab, and silently stolen away from Porticobello House, this independent hook being taken under the ostensible and colourable pretext of a medical opinion that the climate of Bayswater was operating injuriously upon my internal arrangements, but the real *causa causans* and *dessous des cartes* being a growing disinclination for the society of select male and female boarders.

Miss JESSIMINA was naturally bathed in tears at the announcement of my approaching departure, although I fondly sought to console her by assurances that my residence in Highbury, Islington, though beyond the radius and of inaccessible remoteness from Ladbroke Grove, should not obliterate her brilliant image from the cracked looking-glass of my heart, and that I would write to her with weekly regularity, and revisit the glimpses of her moony presence at the first convenient opportunity.

I do correspond with effusiveness and punctu-

ality through the obliging medium of a young intimate Indian acquaintance of mine, who does actually reside at Highbury, and has kindly undertaken to forward my *billets doux*.

This stratagem is necessitated by the circumstance that (as a matter of fact) I am dwelling under a rose at Hereford Road, Westbourne Grove, which is in convenient proximity to Prince's Square and the stately home of the ALLBUTT-INNETT family, with whom I am now promoted to become the tame cat.

In Hereford Road I occupy garishly genteel first-floor front and back apartments at rupees fifteen per week and the Lady of the Land has entreated me to kindly excuse the waiting-maid for jumping with diffidence whenever I pop upon her unpremeditatedly on the stairs, being a nervous girl and unaccustomed to dark-complexioned gentlemen—though her own countenance, from superabundance of blacking and smuts, being of a far superior nigritude, it is I myself who should be more justified in jumping.

However, she is already becoming the *habituée*, and seldom drops the crockery-ware now—except when I simper with too beaming a condescension.

Certain of my readers will perhaps hold up the hands of amazement at my imprudence in disclosing my whereabouts, and other private concerns, in the publicity of a popular periodical —but there is method in such madness; they

"UNACCUSTOMED TO DARK-COMPLEXIONED GENTLEMEN."

do not take in *Punch* at Porticobello House, considering that one penny (or even the moiety of that sum) is more correct value for funny and comical illustrated journalism, while the ALLBUTT-INNETTS, although they see *Punch* weekly do not peruse the literary contents, especially in the season, when, as Mrs A.-I. frequently remarks, they are in such a constant whirl of social dissipation that they have absolutely no time for serious reading.

At first I was severely mortified that—so far as my acquaintances were concerned—these tittlings and jottings should be thus written with water, but I have since made the discovery that my cloud of disappointment is internally lined with precious silver.

Mr Jabberjee is a little over-ingenious in his excuses.

XVIII

SINCE shaking the dust off my feet at Portico-bello House, I have not succeeded to pluck the courage for a personal interview with Miss JESSIMINA, and my correspondence, duly forwarded per Mr BHOOBONE LALL JALPANYBHOY, of Highbury, has consisted mainly of abject excuses for non-attendance on plea of over-study for Bar Exam, and total incapacity to journey due to excessive disorderliness in stomach department.

This, unhappily, at length inspired her with the harrowing dread that I was on the point of being launched into the throes of eternity, if not already as dead as Death's door-nail, and so, with feminine want of reflection, she performed a hurried pilgrimage to Highbury.

Now, whether on account of the beetleheadedness of a domestic, or Baboo JALPANYBHOY'S incompetency in the art of equivocation, I am not to say—but the sequel of her inquiries was the unshakable conviction that I had not struck root in the habitation from which my letters were ostensibly addressed.

And in a subsequently forwarded letter she did reproach me pathetically with my duplicity,

and accused me of being a fickle—by which I was so unspeakably cut up that I abstained from the condescension of a rejoinder.

Next I became the involuntary recipient of another letter in more intemperate style, menacing me that with a hook or a crook, she would dislodge me from the loophole in which I was snugly established, and that several able-bodied boarders were the hue of a full cry in pursuit.

Since Hereford Road is in dangerous proximity to Ladbroke Grove, I was sitting tight in my apartments on receipt of this grave intelligence, with funk in my heart, and the Unknown hovering above me, when my young friend HOWARD ALLBUTT-INNETT, Esq., arrived with his bicycle, like a god on a machine, and perceiving the viridity of my countenance, inquired sympathetically what was up.

At first, being mindful of the excessive liveliness with which he had bantered my residence in a boarding-house of such mediocre pretensions, I was naturally disinclined to reveal that I was in the plight of troth• with the proprietress's daughter; but eventually I overcame my coyness, and uncovered the pretty kettle of fish of my *infandum dolorem*, and my ardent longing to hit upon some plan to extricate myself from the suffocating coils of such a Laocoon.

"My dear old chap," he said kindly, after I had unfolded the last link of my tale of woe, "I will put you up in a dodge that will perform the

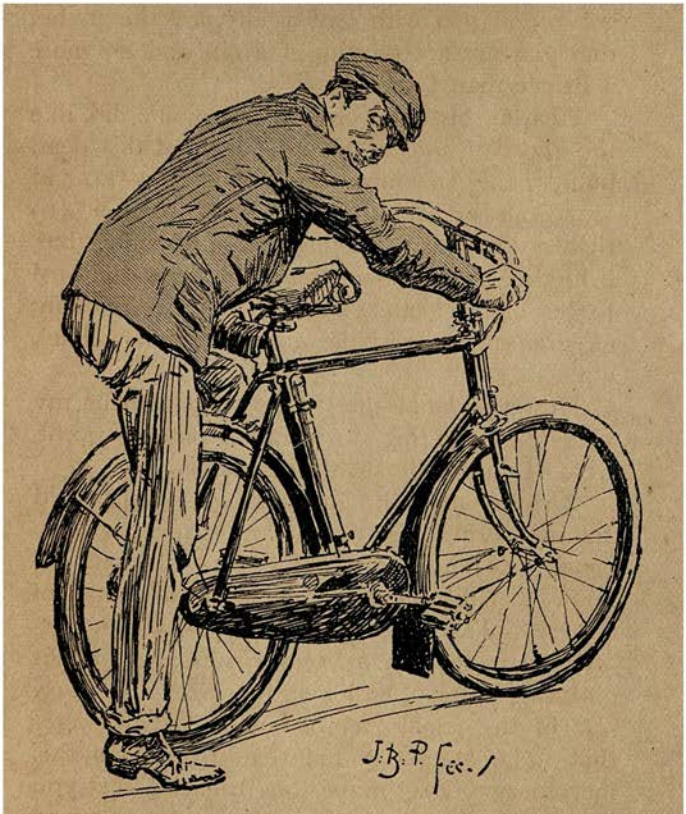
trick. Don't see the young woman, or she will get round you with half a jiffy. Write to her that you are not worthy of a rap, and no more a Prince than I am!"

Hearing his last words, I started, and did, like the ghost of *Hamlet*, Senior, "jump at this dead hour," being convinced that young HOWARD had found out (perhaps from Hon'ble CUMMERBUND) that my title was a bogus, and anticipating that, if he divulged the skeleton of my bare cupboard to his highly genteel parents, I should infallibly experience the crushing mortification of a chuck out.

However, I hid the fox that was nibbling my vitals by inquiring, in a rather natural accent, what he meant by such a suggestion.

"Are you such an innocent, simple old Johnny, Prince," he said, with reassuring *bonhomie*, "as not to catch the idea? Do you not know that European feminines in all ranks of society—alack, even in our own!—are immoderately attracted by anyone possessed of riches and a title—or of either of the two? As an *au fait* in the female temperament, I shall wager that it is nine out of ten that if you spoof this mercenary young minx into believing that you are merely a native impecunious nonentity, and not to be shot at with powder, she will instantaneously drop pursuing such a hot potato."

To this speech (reported *verbatim* to best of my ability) I did shake my head sorrowfully,



"ASCENDED HIS BICYCLE WITH A WAGGISH WINKLE IN HIS EYE."

and reply that I greatly feared that JESSIMINA'S devotion to this unlucky self was too severe to be diverted, or even checked, like a cow that is infuriated or *non compos mentis*, by the mere relinquishment of such tinsel and gewgaw wraps as a title or worldly belongings, having frequently (and that, too, *prior* to our engagement) protested her preference for very dark-complexioned individuals, and her vehement curiosity to behold India.

But he, as he ascended his bicycle with a waggish winkle in his eye, repeated that I might try it on at all events.

Still, I could not induce myself to adopt his spoofish strategy, for I reflected that, though it might convince her that I was unmarriageable, it would only increase her fury and the vengeance of her champion boarders. So at length I composed a moving epistle, as follows :—

INCOMPARABLE—THOUGH LACK-A-DAISY!

INACCESSIBLE—JESSIMINA!

Poet SHAKSPEARE has shrewdly observed that "a true lover never did run a straight course," and the sincerity of present writer's affection is incontestably proved by his apparent crookedness of running, and keeping dark outside the illuminating rays of thy moon-like countenance. The cause is the unforeseen cataclysm of a decree from my family astrologer or *dowybog-hee*, whom I have anxiously consulted upon our joint matrimonial prospects. [MEM. TO THE

READERS. — *This was what young* HOWARD *would term* "the bit of spoof." *I am no ninny-hammer to consult an exploded astrologer!*] *Miserabile dictu!* the venerable and senile pundit reports that such an alliance would infallibly plunge us into the peck of troubles, since the sign of your natal month is the meek and innocent Lamb—while mine is the more ferocious Lion!

A very slight familiarity with Natural History, &c., will show you the utter incompatibility of temper between such an uncongenial couple of animals, and the correctness of said astrologer's prediction that it must infallibly be the Lamb who would be whiphanded in the unequal conflict.

In consequence, though I am beating the floor with my head as I write, and moistening the carpet with the copiousness of my lachrymations, I must bid you the final and irrevocable adieu and *au revoir*, since I am unwilling to act as a selfish. Think of me as "a prince out of thy star," to quote the reference of SHAKSPEARE'S character, *Polonius*, to *Hamlet*, under precisely similar circumstances. You will please forget me *instanter*, and accept this as my last solemn so-long, which I utter on the threshold of preparation for the stern and dreaded ordeal of Bar Exam. In frantic haste,

Your ever faithful and broken-hearted Baboo,
HURRY.

P.S.—*No answer required.*

But after an interval of a very few posts, in spite of my strict injunctions to contrary, I got the answer that she was deeply moved by my self-sacrifice, and had never loved me more. Having been brought up in a Christian disbelief of all astronomy, she was not in fear of my "doweybogey" or any other native bogies, and nothing should part us, if she could help it. She added, that I had been seen about Westbourne Grove recently.

On receipt of this touching and beautiful communication I was again in the stampede of panic, and realised that I must have immediate resort to some stronger description of "Spoof."

It is calamitous that I cannot find a card up my sleeve with the single exception of my young friend HOWARD'S dodge, which I fear will prove too filamentous.

However, a faint heart never got rid of a fair lady!

Mr Jabberjee tries a fresh tack. His visit to the India Office and sympathetic reception.

XIX

IN my last I had the honour to report the total non-success of my endeavour to nill my betrothal on plea of astrological objections, and how I was consequentially up the tree of embarrassment.

I have since resolved that honesty is my best politics, and have confessed to Miss MANKLETOW in a well-expressed curt letter that I am only the possessor of a courtesy title, and, so far from rolling on the rosy bed of unlimited rhino, am out of elbows, and dependent upon parental remittances for pin-money.

For corroboration of said statements I begged to refer her politely to my benevolent friend and patron, Hon'ble Sir CUMMERBUND, Nevern Square, South Kensington; to whom I simultaneously wrote a private and confidential note, instructing him that if any young female person was to inquire particulars of my birth, origin, &c., he was to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, especially making it

clear that I was neither a tip-top Rajah, nor a Leviathan of filthy lucre.

The rest (up to present date) is silence; but I have confident hopes that the manly, straightforward stratagem suggested by my friend, young HOWARD, will accomplish the job, and procure me the happy release.

I am now to pass to a different subject—to wit, a visit I paid some time since to the India Office. The why of the wherefore was that, in conversation with the ALLBUTT-INNETTS, I had boasted freely of the credit I was in with certain high grade India Official nobs, who could refuse me nothing.

Which was hitherto the positive fact, since I had never requested any favour at their hands.

But Mrs ALLBUTT-INNETT stated that she had heard that the reception-soirées at said India Office were extremely enjoyable and classy, and inquired whether I possessed sufficient influence to obtain for her tickets of admission to one of these select entertainments.

Naturally I had to reply that I could indubitably do the trick, and would at once proceed to the India Office and interview one of the senior clerks who regarded me as his brother.

So, after procuring a *Whitaker Almanack*, and hunting up the name of one of the most senior, I cabbed to Whitehall. Inside the entrance I found an attendant sitting at a table absorbed in reading, who rose and inquired my

business, and upon my statement that I desired to see Mr BREAKWATER, Esq., on urgent business, courteously directed me up a marble staircase, at the top of which was a second attendant, also engaged in brown study—for the attendants appear to be laudably addicted to the cultivation of their minds.

He informed me that I should find Mr BREAKWATER'S room down a certain corridor, and proceeding thither, I stopped a clerk who was hurrying along with his hands full of documents, and represented that I had come for an immediate interview with Mr BREAKWATER on highly important matters.

He demanded incredulously whether Mr BREAKWATER expected me.

This elevated my monkey, and I retorted, haughtily, that I was the bosom friend of said Mr B., who would be overjoyed to receive me, and, following him into a room, I peremptorily demanded that he should inform his master without fail that Baboo JABBERJEE was there.

Whereupon, with the nonchalance of a Jack in an office, he rang a bell and desired an attendant to usher me to the waiting-room.

There, in a large gloomy apartment, surrounded by portraits of English and Native big pots, I did sit patiently sucking the golden nob of my umbrella for a quarter of an hour, until the attendant returned, saying, that Mr BREAKWATER could see me now, and presently showed

me into the aforesaid private room, where, behind a large table covered with wicker baskets containing dockets and memoranda, *et hoc genus omne*, sat the very gentleman whom I had recently taken for his own underling!

Formerly I should have proffered abject excuses, but I am now sufficiently up in British observances to know that the only necessary is a frank and breezy apology.

So, disguising my bashful confusion, I said, "I am awfully sorry that I took you, my dear old chap, for a common ordinary fellow; but remember the proverb, that 'appearances are deceitful,' and do not reveal a thin skin about a rather natural mistake."

Mr BREAKWATER courteously entreated me not to mention the affair, but to state my business briefly. Accordingly I related how I was a native Bengalee student, at present moving Heaven and Earth to pass Bar Exam, and my intimate connection with the distinguished Bayswater family of the ALLBUTT-INNETTS, who were consumed with longing for free tickets to an official *soirée*. I then described the transcendent charms of Miss WEE-WEE, and my own ardent desire to obtain her grateful recognition by procuring the open sesame for self and friends. Furthermore, I pointed out that, as an official in the India Office, he was *in loco parentis* to myself, and bound to indulge all my reasonable requests,

and I assured him that if he exhibited generosity on this occasion, the entire ALLBUTT-INNETT family, self included, would ever pray on the crooked hinges of knees for his temporal and spiritual welfare.

He heard me benignantly, but said he regretted that it was not in his power to oblige me.

"You are not to suppose," I said, "that I am a native TOM-DICK or HARRY. I am a B.A. of Calcutta University, and candidate for call to Bar. *In additum*, I am the literary celebrity, being especially retained to jot and tittle for the periodical of *Punch*."

Mr BREAKWATER assured me earnestly that he fully appreciated my many distinguished claims, but that he was under an impossibility of granting my petition for an invite to the annual summer *soirée*, owing to the fact that aforesaid festivity was already the *fait accompli*.

"How is that?" I exclaimed. "Have I not read in the daily press of a grand *durbar* to be given shortly in honour of Hon'ble HUNG CHANG?"

"But that is at the Foreign Office," he objected; "we have no connection with such a concern."

"The Foreign Office would be better than nullity," I said. "I will tell you what to do. Write me a letter to show to the head of the Foreign Office. You can state that you have

"PITCH IT STRONG, MY RESPECTABLE SIR."

known me intimately for a long time, and that I am deserving of patronage. Hint, for instance, that it is impolitic to show favouritism to one Oriental (such as a Chinese) rather than another, and that you will regard any kindness done to me as the personal favour to yourself. Pitch it strong, my respectable Sir!"

He, however, protested that any recommendation from him would be a *brutum fulmen.*

"You are too modest, honoured Sir!" I told him, seeing that flattery was requisite; "but I am not the ignoramus of how highly your character and virtues are esteemed, and I can assure you that you are not so contemptible a nonentity as you imagine. Listen to me; I am now to go to the Foreign Office, and shall there assume the liberty of mentioning your distinguished name as a referee."

With benevolent blandness he accorded me full permission to go where I liked, and say anything I chose, recommending me warmly to depart immediately.

Seeing him so well-disposed, I ventured, on taking my leave, to pat his shoulder in friendly facetiousness, and to say, "It is all right, old boy. Remember, I have complete *bonâ fides* in your ability to work the oracle for me successfully." Which rendered him *sotto voce* with gratification.

But alack! at the Foreign Office, after stating my business and sitting like Patience on a

Monument for two immortal hours, I was officially informed that the Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs was not in, and that all the Private and Under Secretaries were equally invisible.

This, I must respectfully submit, is not exactly the correct style to conduct a first-class Empire!

Mr Jabberjee distinguishes himself in the Bar Examination, but is less successful in other respects. He writes another extremely ingenious epistle, from which he anticipates the happiest results.

XX

I AM happy to announce that I have passed the *pons asinorum* of Bar Exam with facility of a needle penetrating the camel's eye. *Tant mieux!* Huzza! Tol-de-rol-loll!!!

My dilatoriness in publishing this joyful intelligence is due to fact that I have only recently received official information of my triumph, which my family are now engaged in celebrating at Calcutta with pæans of transport, illuminations, fireworks, an English brass band, and delicacies supplied (on contract system) from Great Eastern Hotel.

And yet so great was my humility that, when I entered Lincoln's Inn Hall one Monday shortly before 10 A.M., and received pens, some foolscaps, and a printed exam paper on the Law of Real and Personal Property and Conveyancing, I was at first as melancholy as a gib cat, and like to eat my head with despair!

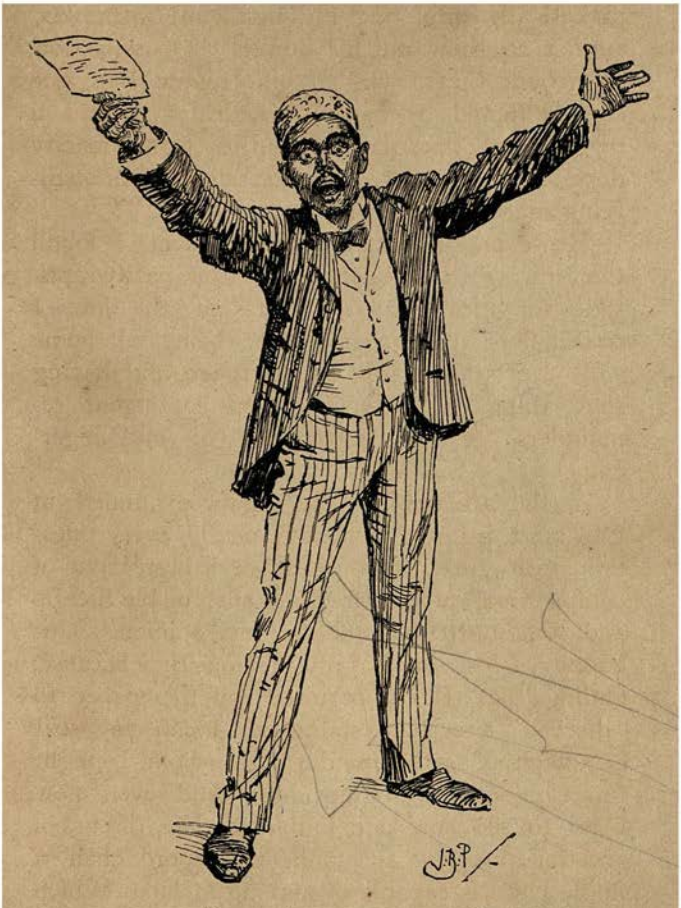
So much so that I began my answers by

pathetically imploring my indulgent father examiner to show me his bowels of compassion, on ground that I was an unfortunate Bengalee chap, afflicted by narrow circumstances and a raging tooth, and that my entire earthly felicity depended upon my being favoured with qualifying marks.

However, on perusal of the paper, I found that, owing to diligent cram and native aptitude for nice sharp quillets of the law, I could floor it upon my *caput*, being at home with every description of mortgage, and having such things as reversions and contingent remainders at the extremities of my finger-ends.

In the afternoon I was again examined in Law and Equity, answering nearly every question with great copiousness and best style of composition, quoting freely from Hon'ble SNELL and UNDERHILL to back my opinion. Unhappily, I lost some of my precious time because, finding that I was required by the paper to "discuss" a certain statement, I left my seat in search of some pundit with whom I might carry on such a logomachy. And even now I fail to see how one individual can discuss a question in pen and ink, any more than a single hand is capable of making a clap. Which I gave as my reason for not attempting the impossible.

The ordeal endured for four days. In the



"HUZZA! TOL-DE-ROL-LOLL!"

Roman Law department, I was on the spot with *Stillicidium* and similar servitudes, and in Criminal Law I did vastly distinguish myself by polishing off an intricate legal problem about Misters A., B. and C., and certain bicycles, though, as I stated in a *postscriptum*, not being the practical cyclist, I could not be at all responsible for the accuracy of my solution, and hinted that it was somewhat *infra dig.* for such solemn dry-as-dusts as the Council of Legal Education to take any notice at all of these fashionable but flimsy mechanisms.

When called up for *vivâ voce* purposes, I dumb-foundered my examiner by the readiness and volubility of my responses, to such an extent that, after asking one question only, he intimated his complete satisfaction, and I divined by his smiles that he was secretly determined to work the oracle in my favour.

And so I arrived at the pretty Pass by dint of flourishing my trumpet. But, heigho! some fly or other is the indispensable adjunct of every pot of ointment, and while I was still jumping for joy at having passed the steep barrier of such a Rubicon, there came a letter from Miss JESSIMINA which constrained me to cachinnate upon the wrong side of nose!

It appeared that, pursuant of my request, she had been to call upon Hon'ble Sir CHETWYND,

who had duly informed her that I was not the genuine Rajah or any kind of real Prince, nor yet a Crœsus with unlimited cash.

Here, if Hon'ble CUMMERBUND had stopped, or represented me as a worthless riddance of bad rubbish, all would have been well; but most unhappily he did exceed his instructions, and added that I was of respectable, well-to-do parentage, and very industrious young chap with first-class abilities, and likely to obtain lucrative practice at native Bar.

JESSIMINA wrote that she hoped she was not so mercenary as to be attracted by mere rank, and that it was enough for her that I was in the position to maintain her as a lady, so she would continue to hold me to my promise of marriage, and if I still declined to perform, she would be reluctantly compelled to place the matter in hands of lawyer.

On seeing that my second attempt to spoof was similarly the utter failure, I became like pig in poke with perplexity, until I was suddenly inspired by the ebullient flash of a happy idea, and taking up my *penna*, inscribed the following epistle:

MAGNANIMOUS AND EVER ADORABLE JESSIMINA!

I am immensely tickled with flattered complacency at your indomitable desire to become

the bride of such a man of straw as this undeserving self, and will no longer offer any factious opposition to your wishes.

But in the intoxicating ardour of my billing and cooing I may have omitted to mention that, when I have led you to the Hymeneal altar, you will not be alone in your glory. As a Koolin Brahmin, I am, by laws of my country, entitled to about thirty or forty spouses, though, owing to natural timidity and economical reasons, I have not hitherto availed myself of said privilege.

However, when that I was a little tiny boy, I was compelled by family pressure to contract matrimony with an equally juvenile female of eight, and, though circumstances have prevented the second ceremony being celebrated on arriving at the more mature age of discretion, such infant marriage is notwithstanding the binding affair.

What of it? Your overwhelming affection will render you totally indifferent to the unpleasant side of your position as a *sateen* or rival wife, though it is the antipode of the bed of roses, especially under internecine feuds and perpetual snipsnaps with sundry aunts and sisters-in-law of mine of rather nagging idiosyncracies. But ignorance of language will probably blind your sensitive ears to the sneering and ill-natured tone of their remarks.

I can only say that I am quite ready (if you

insist upon it) to fulfil my contract to best ability, and undertake the heavy burden which Providence has, very injudiciously, saddled upon my feeble back. Mr CHUCKERBUTTY RAM, of 15 Jubilee Terrace, Clapham, was present at my first wedding, and will doubtless certify to same on application.

Ever yours faithfully and devotedly,

H. B. J.

In writing the above, I was well aware that there is a strong prejudice in the mind of European feminines in favour of monogamy, and my letter (as will be seen by the intelligent reader) was rather cleverly composed so as to shift the burden of breach of contract from my shoulders to hers.

So that I rubbed my hands with gleeful jubilation on receiving her reply that she was astounded with wonderment at the sublimity of my cheek in supposing that she would play the subordinate fiddle to any native wife, and that she had communicated with CHUCKERBUTTY RAM, Esq., and if my statement *re* infant marriage (which at present she suspected to be a mere spoof) proved correct, she would certainly decline my insulting offer.

Now as it is the undeniable fact that I was wedded when a mere juvenile, I shall save my brush from this near shave—provided that Mr CHUCKERBUTTY RAM has received my tip in

time and does not, like Hon'ble CUMMERBUND, go beyond his instructions.

But this is not reasonably probable, Baboo CHUCKERBUTTY RAM being a tolerably discreet, subtle chap.

Mr Jabberjee halloos before he is quite out of the Wood.

XXI

BEING (to my best of belief) satisfactorily off with the old love, I naturally became as playful as a kitten or gay as a grig. For the most superficial observer, and with the half of a naked optic, could easily discern the immeasurable superiority of Miss WEE-WEE to JESSIMINA in all the refinements and delicacies of a real English lady, and although, up to present date, the timidity of girlishness has restrained Miss ALLBUTT-INNETT from reciprocating my increasing spooniness, her parents and brother are of an overwhelming cordiality, and repeatedly mention their ardent hope that I may become their guest up in the hills some time this autumn.

So that Hope is already recommencing to hop jauntily about the secret chamber of my heart.

For, seeing the magnanimous contempt for the snobbishness of chasing a tuft that actuates their bosoms, I am no longer apprehensive that their affection for this present writer will be at all impaired by the revelation that he is merely a member of nature's nobility. Rather the contrary.

As Poet BURNS remarks with great truthfulness, "*Rank is but a penny stamp and a Man is a Man and all that.*" Nevertheless, for the present, I am resolved to remain mum as a mouse.

Since I am now in their pockets for a perpetuity, I was privileged on a recent evening to escort the ALLBUTT-INNETT ladies to the Empire of India Exhibition, upon which I shall now pronounce the opinion of an expert, though space forbids me to describe its multitudinous marvels, save with the brevity of a soul of wit.

In the Cinghalese Palace we beheld a highly pious *Yogi* from Ceylon, who had trained himself to perform his devotions with one of his legs embracing his neck, or walking upon the caps of his knees with his toes inserted into his waistband. But I am not convinced that such a style of prayer-making is at all superior in reverence to more ordinary attitudes, especially when exhibited publicly for an *honorarium*.

I feel proud to narrate that, at Miss WEE-WEE'S urgent entreaties, I subdued my native funkiness so far as to make the revolution of the Gigantic Wheel, in spite of grave apprehensions that it would prove but a house of cards, or suddenly become totally immobile—though to pass interminable hours at a lofty attitude with such a lively companion might, on secondary thoughts, have possessed pleasing saccharine compensations. Nevertheless, I was relieved when we descended without having

hitched anywhere, and I did most firmly decline to fly in the face of Providence for five shillings in the basket of a captive balloon.

The Indian street is constructed with cleverness, but gives a very, very inadequate idea of the principal Calcutta thoroughfares; moreover, to cultivated Indian intellects, the fuss made by English ladies over native artisans and mechanics of rather so-so abilities and appearance seems a little ludicrous!

After dining, we witnessed the Historical Spectacle of India in the Empress Theatre, and Miss WEE-WEE made the criticism that the fall of Somnath was accomplished with a too great facility, since its so-called defenders did lie down with perfect tameness and counterfeit death immediately the army of Sultan MAHMUD galloped their horses through the gateway.

But this appeared to me rather a typical and prudent exercise of their discretion.

It seems — though (in spite of extensive historical researches) I was in previous ignorance of the fact—that Sultan MAHMUD, the Great Mogul AKBAR, and SIVAJI, the Mahratta Chief, were each taken in tow and personally conducted by a trio of Divine Guides, respectively named Love, Mercy and Wisdom, who came forward whenever nothing of consequence was transpiring, and sang with the melodiousness of Paradisiacal fowls.

As for the representation of the Hindu Para-

dise, I shall confess to some disappointment, seeing that it was exclusively reserved to military masculines—the more highly educated civilian class of Baboos being left out of the cold altogether! Nor am I in love with a future state in which there is so much dancing up and down lofty flights of stairs with terpsichorean energy, and manœuvring in companies and circles with members of the softer sex. As a philosophical conception of disembodied existence, it is undeniably deficient in repose, though perhaps good enough for ordinary fighting chaps!

I spent a rapturous and ripping evening, however, greatly owing to the condescension of Miss WEE-WEE, who exhibited such entertainment at my comments that I left under the confident persuasion that I was infallibly to be the favoured swain.

On returning to Hereford Road, I found a last letter from JESSIMINA, beseeching me, for the sake of "Old Langsyne," to meet her on the following evening at Westbourne Park Station, and mentioning that certain events had occurred to change her views, and she was now only desirous for an amicable arrangement.

Accordingly, perceiving that I had no longer any reason to dread such an encounter, and not wishing her to peak and pine through my unkindness, I wrote at once accepting the *rendezvous*.

When I duly turned up, lo and behold! I

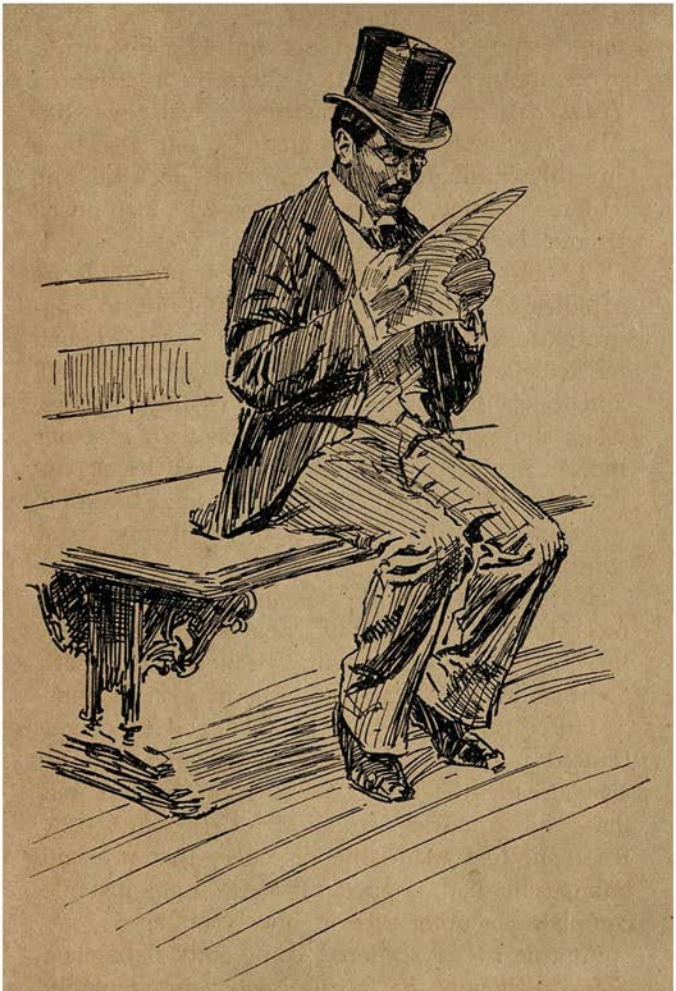
found she was escorted, not only by her eagle-eyed mother (JESSIMINA herself inherits, in *Hamlet's* immortal phraseology, "an eye like Ma's, to threaten or command"), but also by a juvenile individual with a black neck-tie and Hebrew profile, whom she formerly introduced to me as Mr SOLOMONS.

Though a little hurt by this proof of the rapidity of feminine fickleness, I began to congratulate her effusively on having obtained such an excellent substitute for my worthless self, and to wish the happy couple all earthly felicities, when she explained that he was not a *fiancé*, but merely a sort of friend, and Mrs MANKLETOW severely added that they had come to know whether I still declined to fulfil my legal contract.

Naturally I made the answer that I had recently offered to fulfil same to best ability, but that, my offer having been declined with contumeliousness, the affair was now on its end.

Here JESSIMINA said that she had of course refused to marry a man who declared that he was already the owner of a dusky spouse, but that, on inquiries from Mr CHUCKERBUTTY RAM, she had made the discovery that my said infant wife had popped off with some juvenile complaint or other three or four years ago.

At this I was rendered completely flabaghast —for, although the allegation was undeniably correct, I had confidently hoped that my friend



"A ROYAL COMMAND FROM THE QUEEN-EMPRESS."

RAM was unaware of the fact, or would at least have the ordinary mother-wit to refrain from blurting it out! "*Et tu, Brute!*" But I must make the dismal confession that my friends are mostly a very fat-witted sort of fellows.

Que faire?—except to explain that my melancholy bereavement must have entirely slipped off my memory, and that in any case it had no logical connection with the matter in hand.

Then Mrs MANKLETOW inquired, would I, or would I not, marry her illused child? and stated that all she wished for was a plain answer.

I replied that it was a very natural and moderate desire, and I was prepared to gratify it at once by the plain answer of—*Not on any account.*

Whereupon Mr SOLOMONS stepped forward and politely handed me a folded paper, and, observing that he thought there was no need to protract the interview, he lifted his hat and went off with the ladies, leaving myself upon a bench endeavouring to get the sense of the official document into my baffled and bewildered nob.

Eventually, I gathered that it was a Royal command from the Queen-Empress, backed by the Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain, that I was to enter my appearance in an action at the suit of JEMIMA MANKLETOW for a claim of damages for having breached my promise to marry!

* * * * *

No matter! Pugh! Fiddle-de-dee! Never mind! Who cares?

Having successfully passed Exam, and been called to the Bar, I am now an *amicus curiæ*, and the friend in Court.

I shall enter my appearance in the forensic costume of wig and gown.

What will be the price of the plaintiff's pleadings *then*, Madams?

Mr Jabberjee places himself in the hands of a solicitor—with certain reservations.

XXII

I CONCLUDED my foregoing instalment, narrating my service of a writ for breaching a promise of marriage, with a spirited outburst of *insouciance* and devilmaycarefulness.

But such courage of a Dutch evaporated deplorably on closer perusal of the said writ, which contained the peremptory mandate that I was to enter my appearance within the incredibly short notice of eight days, or the judgment would be given in my absence!

Now it was totally out of the question that I was to prepare a long complicated defence, and have the requisite witnesses, and also perfect myself in the customs and etiquettes of Common Law Procedure, all in such a ridiculously brief period; and yet, if I remained *perdu* with a hidden head, I could not hope for even the minimum of justice, since, heigh-ho! *les absents ont toujours tort.* So that I shed blistering and scalding tears like a spanked child, to find myself confronting such a devil of a deep sea, and my day was dismal and my night a nonentity, until, by a great piece of potluck, on going up

the next morning to the library of my Inn, I espied my young friend HOWARD in the compound, busily employed in a lawn tennis game.

Having partially poured the cat from my bag already into his sympathetic and receptive bosom, I decided to confide to him my hard case in its entirety, and so made him a secret sign that I desired some private confabulations at his earliest conveniency, which he observing, after the termination of the match, came towards the remote bench whereon I was forlornly moping, and sat down kindly by my side.

This young ALLBUTT-INNETT, I am to mention here, had only just missed succeeding in the passing of Bar Exam owing to the inveterate malignancy of his stars and lack of a more industrial temperament; but from the coolness of his cheek, and complete man-of-the-worldliness, is a most judicious and tip-top adviser to friends in tight places.

Experto crede, for, when he had heard the latest particulars of my shocking *imbroglio*, he promptly gave me the excellent advice that I was to consult a solicitor; strongly recommending a Mr SIDNEY SMARTLE, who was a former schoolmate of his own, and a good thundering chap, and who (he thought) was not so overburdened as yet by legal business that he could not find time for working the oracle on my behalf.

"And look here, JAB," he added (he has some-

times the extreme condescension to address me as an abbreviation), "I'll trot you up to him at once—and I say, A 1 idea! tell him you mean to be your own counsel, and do all the speechifying yourself. Native prince, in brand-new wig and gown, defending himself single-handed from wiles of artful adventuress—why, you'll knock the jury as if with old boots!"

"Alack," said I, sorrowfully; "though I am quite competent to become the stump orator at shortest notice, I do not see how I can enter my first appearance until I have carefully instructed Misters RAM and JALPANYBHOY in the evidence they are to give and leave untold, &c., and a week is too scanty and fugitive a period for such preparations!"

"Nonsense and stuff!" he replies, "you will have a lot more than that, since the week only applies to entering an appearance—which is a mere farcical formality that old SID can perform in your place on his head." At which I was greatly relieved.

But on arrival at Mr SMARTLE'S office in Chancery Lane, we were disappointed to be informed, by a small, juvenile clerk, that he was absent at Wimbledon on urgent professional affairs, and his return was the unknown quantity. However, after waiting till close upon the hour of tiffin, he unexpectedly turned up in a suit of knickerbockers, carrying a long, narrow bag full of metal-headed rods, and although rather adole-

scent than senile in physical appearance I was vastly impressed by the offhanded cocksurety of his manner.

My friend HOWARD introduced me, and exhibited my doleful predicament in the shell of a nut, whereupon Mr SMARTLE jauntily pronounced it to be the common garden breach of promise, but that we had better all repair to the First Avenue Hotel and lunch, and talk the affair over afterwards.

Which we did in the smoking-room after lunch, with coffee, liqueurs, and cigars, &c., for which I had to pay, as a Tommy Dod, and the odd man out of pocket.

Mr SMARTLE, after listening attentively to my narrative, said that I certainly seemed to him to have let myself into the deuced cavity of a hole by so publicly proclaiming my engagement, but that my status as an oriental foreigner, and the fact I had asserted—viz., that my promise was extorted from me by compulsion and sheer physical funkiness — might pull me through, unless the plaintiff were of superlative loveliness (which, fortunately, is by no means the case).

He added, that we had better engage WITHERINGTON, Q.C., as he was notoriously the crossest examiner at the Common Bar.

But to this I opposed the *sine quâ non* that I am to have the sole control of my case in court, and reap the undivided *kudos*, assuring him that I should be able to cross-examine all witnesses

until they could not stand on one leg. From some private motives of his own, he sought to overcome my determination, hinting that, as my calling and election to the Bar were not yet an ancient history, I might not possess sufficient experience; and moreover that, by appearing in barristerial garbage, I should infallibly forfeit the indulgence shown by a judge to ordinary litigants; to which I responded by pointing out that I was a typical Indian in the matter of legal subtlety and ready-made wit, and that, if not capable of conducting my *own* case, how, then, could I be fit to undertake a logomachy for any third parties? finally, that it is proverbially unnecessary to keep a dog when you are equally proficient in the practice of barking yourself.

Whereupon, silenced by my *a fortiori* and *reductio ad absurdum*, he gave way, saying that it was my own affair, and, anyhow, there would be plenty of time to consider such a matter, since the plaintiff might not choose to do anything further till after the Long Vacation, and we could easily postpone the hearing of the action until the Midsummer of next year.

I, however, earnestly protested that I did not wish so procrastinated a delay, as I desired to make my forensic *début* at the earliest possible moment, and urged him to leave no stone unturned to get the job finished by November at least, suggesting that if we could ascertain

the name and address of the judge who was to try the case, I might call upon him, and, in a private and confidential interview, ascertain the extent of his disposition in my favour, and the length of his foot.

To which Mr SMARTLE replied that he could not recommend any such tactics, as I should certainly ascertain the dimensions of the judicial foot in a literal and painful manner.

Now I must conclude with a livelier piece of intelligence: I am now in receipt of the wished-for invitation to visit the ALLBUTT-INNETT family at the elegant mansion (or—to speak Scottishly—"manse") they have hired for a few weeks in the savage and romantic mountains of Ayrshire, N.B.

Mrs A.-I. wrote that there is no shooting attached to the manse, but several aristocratic friends of theirs own moors in the vicinity, and will inevitably invite them and their visitors to sport with them, so that, as she believed I was the keen sportsman, I had better bring my gun.

Alack! I am not the happy possessor of any lethal weapon, but, having since this invitation practised diligently upon tin moving beasts, bottles, and eggs rendered incredibly lively by a jet of steam, I am at last an *au fait* with a crackshot, and no end of a Nimrod.

I do not think I shall purchase a gun, for there is a young English acquaintance of mine who is the Devil's Own Volunteer, and who will

"WOULD BE GREATLY IMPROVED BY THE SIMPLE ADDITION OF SOME KNEE-CAPS."

no doubt have the good nature to lend me his rifle for a week or two.

As to costume, my tailor assures me that it is totally unnecessary to assume the national raiment of a Scotch, unless I am prepared to stalk after a stag. But why should I be deterred by any cowardly fear from pursuing so constitutionally timid a quadruped? I have therefore commissioned him to manufacture me a petticoat kilt, with a chequered tartan, and other accessories, for when we are going to Rome, it is the mark of politeness to dress in the Romish style.

The Caledonian costume is indubitably becoming; but would, I venture humbly to think, be greatly improved by the simple addition of some knee-caps.

Mr Jabberjee delivers his Statement of Defence, and makes his preparations for the North. He allows his patriotic sentiments to get the better of him in a momentary outburst of disloyalty — to which no serious importance need be attached.

XXIII

My fair plaintiff has not suffered the grass of inaction to grow upon her feet, having already issued her Statement of Claim, by which she alleges that I proposed marriage on a certain date, and did subsequently, on divers occasions, treat her, in the presence of sundry witnesses, as an affianced, after which I mizzled into obscurity, and on various pretexts did decline, and do still decline, to fulfil my nuptial contract, by which conduct the plaintiff, being grievously afflicted in mind, body, and estate, claims damages to the doleful tune of £1000.

(N.B.—I have thought it advisable here and there to translate the legal phraseology into more comprehensible verbiage.)

Now such a claim is to milk a ram, or *prendre la lune avec les dents*, seeing that I am not a proprietor of even one thousand rupees. Never-

theless (as I have informed Mr SMARTLE), my progenitor, the Mooktear, will bleed to any reasonable extent of costs out of pocket.

I have held frequent and lengthy interviews with the said SMARTLE, Esq., who is of incredible despatch and celerity—though I sometimes regret that I did not procure a solicitor of a more senile and sympathetic disposition.

Assuredly had I done so, such an one would not, after perusing my Statement of Defence—a most magnificently voluminous document of over fifty folios, crammed and stuffed with satirical hits and sideblows, and pathetic appeals for the Bench's indulgence, and replete with familiar quotations from best classical and continental authors—such an one, I say, would not have split his sides with disrespectful chucklings, thrown my composition into a wasted paper receptacle, and proceeded to knock off a meagre substitute of his own, containing a very few dry bald paragraphs, in the inadequately brief space of under the hour.

Such, however, was Mr SMARTLE'S course; and the sole consolation is that, owing to his unprofessional precipitation, the action was set down for trial previously to the commencement of the Long Vacation, and my case may come on some time next Term, and I be put out of my misery at the close of the year.

My aforesaid legal adviser, finding that I adhered with the tenacity of bird-slime to my

determination to conduct my case in person, did hint in no ambiguous language, that it might perhaps be even better for me to do the guy next November to my native land, and snip my fingers then from a safe distance at the plaintiff.

But it is not my practice to exhibit a white feather (except when prostrated by severe bodily panics), and I am consumed by an ardent impatience to air my fluencies and legal learnedness before the publicity of a London Law Court.

Now, begone dull care! for I am to dismiss all litigious thoughts till October or November next, and become a *Dolce far niente*, chasing the deer with my heart in the Highlands.

My volunteering acquaintance, by the way, has declined to lend me his rifle, on the transparent pretence that it was contrary to regulations, and that it was not the *bon ton* to pursue grouse-birds and the like with so war-like a weapon.

So, on young HOWARD'S advice, I made the purchase from a pawnbroker of a lethal instrument, provided with a duplicate bore, so that, should a bird happen by any chance to escape my first barrel, the second will infallibly make him bite the dust.

I have also purchased some cartridges of a very pleasing colour, a hunting knife, and a shot belt and pouch, and if I can only procure some inexpensive kind of sporting hound from the Dogs'

Home, I shall be forewarned and forearmed *cap à pie* for the perils and pleasures of the chase.

Miss WEE-WEE did earnestly advise me, inasmuch as I was about to go amongst the savage hill tribes of canny Scotians, to previously make myself acquainted with their idioms, &c., for which purpose she lent me some romances written entirely in Caledonian dialects, also the compositions of Hon. Poet BURNS.

But hoity-toity! after much diligent perusal, I arrived at the conclusion that such works were sealed books to the most intelligent foreigner, unless he is furnished with a good Scotch grammar and dictionary.

And *mirabile dictu!* though I have made diligent inquiries of various London booksellers, I have found it utterly impossible to obtain such works in England—a haughty and arrogantly dispositioned country, more inclined to teach than to learn!

How many of your boasted British Cabinet, supposed to rule our countless millions of so-called Indian subjects, would be capable to sit down and read and translate—*correctly*—a single sentence from the Mahábhárat in the original?

Not more, I shrewdly suspect, than half a dozen at most!

So it is not to be expected that any more interest would be displayed in the language and literature of a country like Scotland, which is notoriously wild and barren and less densely

populated and productive than the most ordinary districts of Bengal.

Oh, you pusillanimous Highland chiefs and other misters! how long will you tamely submit to such offhanded treatment? Will the day never come when, with whirling sporrans and flashing pibrochs you will rise against the alien oppressor, and demand Home Rule, together with the total abolition of present disdainful British *insouciance?*

When that day dawns—if ever—please note this piece of private intelligence from an authorised source: *Young Bengal will be with you in your struggle for Autonomy.* If not in body, assuredly in spirit. Possibly in *both.*

I say no more, in case I should be accused of trying to stir up seditious feelings; but, as a patriotic Baboo gentleman, my blood will boil occasionally at instances of stuck-up English self-sufficiency, and the worm in the bud, if nipped too severely, may blossom into a rather formidable serpent!

As, for instance, when, in the course of an inoffensive promenade, I am addressed by an underbred street-urchin as a "blooming blacky;" and cannot induce a policeman to compel my aggressor to furnish me with his name and address or that of his parents, or even to offer the most ordinary apology.

Enough of these rather bitter reflections, however. I omitted to mention that I am also the

"I AM ADDRESSED BY AN UNDERBRED STREET-URCHIN AS A 'BLOOMING BLACKY!'"

proprietor (at the same pawnbroker's where I bought my breeches-loader gun) of a very fine second-hand salmon-rod, a great bargain and immense value, with which I hope to be able to catch a great quantity of fishes.

For there is, according to young HOWARD, good fishing in a burn adjoining the Manse, so I shall follow King Solomon's injunctions, and not spare the rod and spoil the salmons, though if I should happen to "spoil" my rod, the salmons would inevitably in consequence be "spared."

This is a sample of the kind of verbal pleasantries in which, when in exhilarated high spirits, I sometimes facetiously indulge.

Mr Jabberjee relates his experiences upon the Moors.

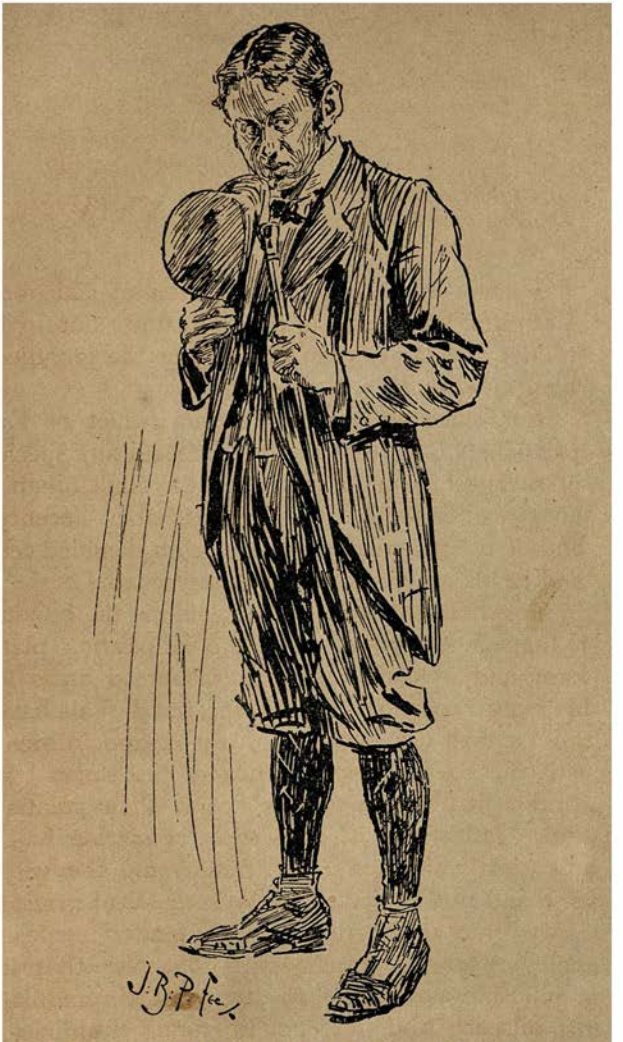
XXIV

I AM now an acclimatised denizen of Caledonia stern and wild; which, however, turns out to be milder and tamer than depicted by the jaundiced hand of national jealousy.

For, since my arrival at this hamlet of Kilpaitrick, N.B., I have not once beheld any species of savage hill-man; moreover, the adult inhabitants are clothed with irreproachable decency, and, if the juveniles run about with denuded feet and heads, where is the shocking scandal?

Mr ALLBUTT-INNETT, sen., did me the honour to appear in person upon the Kilpaitrick platform, and welcome me with outspread arms to his temporary hearth and home, but I shall have the candour of confessing my disappointment with the size and appearance of the same. It appears that a "Manse" is not at all a palatial edifice, furnished with a plethora of marble halls and vassals and serfs, &c., but simply the very so-so and two-storied abode of some local priest!

My gracious hostess was to tender profuse apologies for its homeliness, on the plea that it is refreshing at times to lay aside ceremonial magnificence and unbend in rural simplicity,



"OF INCREDIBLE BASHFULNESS AND BUCOLICAL APPEARANCE."

though it is not humanly possible to unbend oneself upon the thorny bosoms of chairs and couches severely upholstered with the prickling hairs of an extinct horse.

Still, as I assured Miss WEE-WEE, she is the happy owner of a magical knack to transform, by her sheer apparition, the humblest hovel into the first-class family residence with every modern improvement.

With the said Miss I continue on terms of hand and gloveship, with mutual harmless jokes, which would perhaps be as caviare on toast to a general, though I shall venture to recount some examples.

A certain local young laird, of incredible bashfulness and bucolical appearance, is a frequent visitor at the manse, and the fervent admirer of Miss WEE-WEE, who cannot endure the tedium of his society, and is constantly endeavouring to escape therefrom.

Now his name is Mr CRUM, and I have frequently entertained her in private by play upon the word, alluding to him as "Mister CRUST," "Mister OATCAKE," or "the Scotch Bun," and the like; but he informed me that he preferred to be addressed as "Balbannock," and upon my inquiring his reasons for selecting such an alias, he answered that it was because he inhabited a house of that name.

Whereupon I facetiously requested that he would address myself in future as "Mister

Seventy-nine, Hereford Road, Bayswater," which stroke of wit occasioned inextinguishable merriment from Miss WEE-WEE, though it did not excite from the aforesaid laird so much as the smallest simper !

From an ingrained love of teasing, and also the natural desire to stimulate her appreciation of my superior fertility in small talk and *l'art de plaire*, I do often slyly contrive to inflict his sole society upon her—to the huge entertainment of her father and mother, who carry on the joke by assisting my manœuvrings ; but, although it affords me a flattering gratification to be plaintively upbraided by Miss WEE-WEE for my cruel desertion, I am resolved not to persist in such heartless pranks beyond her natural endurance.

Shortly after my arrival I heard from my host that he was the recipient of an invitation from a Mister BAGSHOT, Q.C., that he and his son HOWARD would accompany him to a shooting expedition upon some adjacent moors, and that, being now immoderately plump, and past his prime as a potshot, he had requested leave to nominate myself as his *budli* or substitute, explaining that I was a young Indian prince of great prowess at every kind of big games.

Accordingly, to my great delight, it was arranged that I should take his place.

My young friend HOWARD, beholding me appear at the breakfast-table arrayed in my

short kilt and superincumbent belly-purse with tassels, did entreat me to change myself into ordinary knickerbockers, lest I should catch death with a cold.

But I declined, disdaining such dangers, and assuring him that I did not at all dislike the excessive ventilation of my knees.

We drove to Mr BAGSHOT'S residence, Rowans Castle, in a hired machine, and found the gentlemen-shooters gathered outside the portico. Amongst the party I was pleased to observe Hon'ble Justice CUMMERBUND, who, when we were all ascended into the waggonette-break, did rally me very good-humouredly upon some mixed bag of elephants and tigers he had heard (or so he said) I had accomplished in some up-country jungle.

At first, knowing that this was the utter impossibility, I perspired with terror that he was making me the fool, but apparently he was himself under a misunderstanding, for when we had left the vehicle and were preparing to advance, he paid me the distinguished compliment of entreating that I might be awarded the command of one extremity of the line, while he himself was to preside over the opposite end!

And thus we commenced to climb a steep hill, thickly covered with a very pricklesome heather, and black slimy bogs, wherein the varnish of my patent-leather shoes did soon

become totally dimmed. So, being gravely incommoded by the shortness of my wind, I entrusted my musket to an under-keeper, begging him to inform me of the early approach of any stag or deer.

However, we saw nothing to shoot at except various sorts of wild poultry, and when some of these flew up immediately in front of me, I was too late, owing to the carriage of my gun by an underling, to do more than fire off a couple of barrels as a declaration of hostility.

But profiting by this lesson in being *semper paratus*, I refused to part again with my deadly instrument, and stumbled manfully onwards with finger upon the triggers, letting them fly instantaneously at the first appearance of any animals *ferœ naturæ*.

It is not customary, I was assured, to slay the wild sheep in these districts, though horned, and of an excessively ferocious appearance, and even when firing my bullets at birds, I was subjected to continual reproofs from some officious keeper or other.

For example, I was not to shoot into a flock of partridges, for the superstitious reason, forsooth! that it was still the month of August, which is supposed to be unlucky!

Again, I was rebuked for burning powder at a grey hen, because it is the wife of a black-cock, which may be shot with impunity. Although a highly chivalrous chap in questions

of the fairer sex, I am yet to see why it is allowable to render the female bird a bereaved widow, but totally forbidden to make the male a widower! Or why it is permissible to slay a minute bird such as a snipe, while a titlark is on no account to be touched.

Being eventually exasperated by these unreasonable faultfindings, seeing that I had merely emptied my gun-barrels without actually destroying any of these sacred volatiles, I addressed the keeper in the withering tones of a sarcasm: "Mister Keeper," I said, "as I am not the ornithologist or soothsayer to distinguish infallibly every species of bird by instinct when flying with incredible velocity, would it not be better that I should discharge no shots in future?"

To which, abashed by my severity, he replied that he could not just say that it would make any considerable difference whether I fired at all or none.

My fellow-shooters, however, could not refrain from shouting with irrepressible admiration at the intrepidity with which, forestalling the fleetest dogs, I did rush forward to pick up the fallen grouse-birds, and repeatedly exhorted me to take greater care for my own safety.

I cannot say that they exhibited equivalent courageousness, seeing that, so often as I raised my gun to fire, they flung themselves upon their stomachs in the heather until I had finished,

upon which I rallied them mercilessly upon their timidity, assuring them repeatedly that they had nothing to fear.

Yet English and Scotch alike accuse us Bengalees of being subject to excessive funkiness. What about the Pot and the Kettle, Misters?

I am to reserve the conclusion of my shooting experiences until a future occasion.

Mr Jabberjee concludes the thrilling account of his experiences on a Scotch moor, greatly to his own glorification.

XXV

NOW to resume the rather arbitrarily truncated account of my gunnery on Scottish moors.

Before luncheon I ventured to remonstrate earnestly with my entertainer, Mr BAGSHOT, Q.C., concerning the extreme severity with which he chastised a juvenile sporting hound of his for such trivial offences as running after some rabbit, or picking up slaughtered volatiles without receiving the *mot d'ordre!*

"Listen, honourable Sir," I entreated him, "to the voice of Reason! It is the second nature of all such canines to pursue vermins, nor are they at all capable of comprehending the Why and Wherefore of a shocking flagellation. If it is your wish that this hound should play the part of a Tantalus, forbidden even to touch the *bonne-bouches* with his watering mouth, surely it is possible to restrain him by a more humane method than Brute Force!"

At this mild reproof Mister BAGSHOT became utterly rubescent, murmuring excuses which I

did not catch; and I, perceiving that this object lesson of kindness to animals from an Oriental had strongly affected all the shooters, patted the hound on the forehead, consoling him with some chocolate I carried in my cartridge sack.

We picnicked our lunch under a stone wall, and I, becoming an hilarious, rallied my companions unmercifully upon the solemnity with which they had marched in cautious silence, and with stern countenances as to attack some formidable foe—and all to slaughter sundry braces of inoffensive grouse-birds—truly an heroical sort of undertaking!

To which Hon'ble CUMMERBUND replied, with his utterance impeded by cold pie, that I might congratulate myself on having kept my own hands unstained by any grouse's gore.

"True, Mister Ex-Judge," I retorted, "but as you have already testified" (here I hoisted his own petard at him rather ingeniously), "I am more an *au fait* in the extermination of elephants *et hoc genus omne*, and have hitherto reserved my powder and shot for a stag or some similar monarch of the glen. However, after lunch let us see whether I am not competent to kill, or at least maim, one of these same grouse-fowls, *faute de mieux!*"

A repartee which excited uproarious laughter (at Hon'ble C.'s expense) from all the present company.

Subsequently, we were posted in a row of small fortresses constructed of turfs, to await what is termed a "Drive," *i.e.*, until some flock of grouse-birds, exasperated to fury by the cries and blows of certain individuals called "beaters," should attack our positions.

Hearing that the grouses on this moor were of an excessive wildness, I was at first apprehensive that one might fly at my nose or eyes while I was busied in defending myself against its fellows, but the keeper who was with me assured me that such was seldom their custom.

And, indeed, such as came in my direction flew with wings so accelerated by panic that they were invisible before I could even select one as my target, so I was reduced to fire with considerable random. Presently the beaters approached, carrying flags of truce, and we sallied out of our forts to pick up the slain and wounded. After diligent search, I had the happiness to discover a grouse-bird, stone dead, in the heather, and, capering with triumph, called to the keeper to come and see the spoil.

On his arrival, however, he said that he could not just think it would be my bird, as he had not noticed any fall in that direction. But after I had presented him with a piece of silver, he did agree that if I chose to claim the bird as mine, it was not his place to contradict me, and so in

great glee I exhibited my prize to the others, appealing to the keeper (who basely remained *sotto voce*) for confirmation.

"A devilish clean shot, Prince!" Sir CUMMERBUND graciously remarked; "why, the bird is stiff and cold already!"

Whereupon I was cordially congratulated, and awarded the tail feathers to decorate my "tommy-shanty," and during the next driving, having now acquired the knack, I rendered several more denizens of the air the *hors de combats*, though—either on account of their great ingenuity in running out of the radius, or creeping into holes, etc., or else the stupidity of the retrieving dogs—their corpses remained irrecoverable.

On taking my leave, I expressed unbounded satisfaction with such sport as I had had, and my fixed intention to assist on some similar shooting-expedition, and Mr BAGSHOT kindly promised to let me know if he should again have vacancy for an additional gun.

I regret to say that young HOWARD, who, having only laid low a couple of black cocks and a blue hare, was immoderately jealous of my superior skilfulness, did seek to depreciate it by insinuating that my grouse was one which, having been seriously wounded by other hands some days previously, had come up to the hills to shuffle off its mortal coil in seclusion, arguing

"I PRESENTED MY TROPHY AND TREASURE-TROVE TO THE FAIRYLIKE MISS WEE-WEE."

thus from its total absence of heat and suppleness.

This is the merest quibble, and to travel out of the record, since, of course, if a bird is at all of a venerable age, it becomes stiff and deficient in vital warmth long before it is popped off! Moreover, if the grouse were not legitimately my property, why, forsooth, should I be permitted to carry it home?

I presented my trophy and treasure-trove to the fairylike Miss WEE-WEE, who was so overwhelmed by the compliment that she entreated for it to be cooked and eaten *instanter*.

As soon as I have recovered a missing link of my fishing-rod (which it seems has been overlooked by Mister Pawnbroker), and when I have procured some suitable bait, &c., it is my intention to catch a fine salmon out of the burn for my enchanting divinity, and, as I place the fish in her lily-like hands, to strike iron while it is hot and make her the formal proposal of matrimony.

Mister CRUM, hearing of my piscatorial ambitions, has, with almost incredible simplicity, offered to lend me his salmon rod, with a volume of flies, little suspecting that he will be assisting me to catch two fish upon one hook! I am immensely tickled by such a tip-top joke, and can scarcely refrain from imparting it to Miss WEE-WEE herself, though I shall wait until I have first secured the salmon.

I had some valuable remarks upon Scottish idioms and linguistic peculiarities, &c., but these, of course, are to be suppressed *sine die*—unless I am to be permitted to overflow into a special supplement.

Mr Jabberjee expresses some audaciously sceptical opinions. How he secured his first Salmon, with the manner in which he presented it to his divinity.

XXVI

OWING mainly to lack of opportunity, invitations, *et cætera*, I have not resumed the offensive against members of the grouse department, but have rather occupied myself in laborious study of Caledonian dialects, as exemplified in sundry local works of poetical and prose fiction, until I should be competent to converse with the *aborigines* in their own tongue.

Then (having now the diction of Poet BURNS in my fingers' ends) I did genially accost the first native I met in the street of Kilpaitrick, complimenting him upon his honest, sonsie face, and enquiring whether he had wha-haed wi' Hon'ble WALLACE, and was to bruise the Peckomaut, or ca' the knowes to the yowes. But, from the intemperance of his reply, I divined that he was totally without comprehension of my meaning!

Next I addressed him by turns in the phraseologies of Misters BLACK, BARRIE, and CROCKETT, Esquires, interlarding my speech with "whatefers,"

and "hechs," and "ou-ays," and "dod-mons," and "loshes," and "tods," *ad libitum*, to which after listening with the most earnest attention, he returned the answer that he was not acquainted with any Oriental language.

Nor could I by any argument convince this beetle-head that I was simply speaking the barbarous accents of his native land!

Since which, after some similar experiments upon various peasants, &c., I have made a rather peculiar discovery.

There is no longer any such article as a separate Scottish language, and, indeed, I am in some dubitation whether it ever existed at all, and is not rather the waggish invention of certain audacious Scottishers, who have taken advantage of the insular ignorance and credulity of the British public to palm off upon it several highly fictitious kinds of unintelligible gibberish!

Nay, I will even go farther and express a grave suspicion whether the Scotland of these bookish romances is not the daring imposture of a *ben trovato*. For, after a prolonged residence of over a fortnight, I have never seen anything approaching a mountain pass, nor a dizzy crag, surmounted by an eagle, nor any stag drinking itself full at eve among the shady trunks of a deer-forest! I have never met a single mountaineer in feminine bonnet and plumes and short petticoats, and pipes inserted in a bag. Nor do the inhabitants dance in the street upon

"WHETHER HE HAD WHA-HAED WI' HON'BLE WALLACE?"

crossed sword-blades—this is purely a London practice. Nor have I seen any Caledonian snuffing his nostrils with tobacco from the discarded horn of some ram.

Finding that my short kilt is no longer the mould of national form, I have now altogether abandoned it, while retaining the fox-tailed belly-purse on account of its convenience and handsome appearance.

Now let me proceed to narrate how I became the captor of a large-sized salmon.

Having accepted the loan of Mister CRUM'S fishing-wand, and attached to my line certain large flies, composed of black hairs, red worsted, and gilded thread, which it seems the salmons prefer even to worms, I sallied forth along the riparian bank of a river, and proceeded to whip the stream with the severity of Emperor XERXES when engaged in flagellating the ocean.

But waesucks! (to employ the perhaps spurious verbiage of aforesaid Poet BURNS) my line, owing to superabundant longitude, did promptly become a labyrinth of Gordian knots, and the flies (which are named *Zulus*) attached their barbs to my cap and adjacent bushes with well-nigh inextricable tenacity, until at length I had the bright idea to abbreviate the line, so that I could dangle my bait a foot or two above the surface of the water—where a salmon could easily obtain it by simply turning a somersault.

However, after sitting patiently for an hour,

as if on a monument, I could not succeed in catching the eye of any passing fish, and so, severely disheartened by my ill-luck, I was strolling on, shouldering my rod, when — odzooks! whom should I encounter but Mister BAGSHOT and a party of friends, who were watching his keepers capture salmons from a boat by means of a large net, a far more practical and effectual method than the cumbersome and unreliable device of a meretricious fly with a very visible hook!

And, just as I approached, the net was drawn towards the bank, and proved to contain three very large lively fishes lashing their tails with ungovernable fury at such detention!

Whereupon I made the humble petition to Mister BAGSHOT that, since he was now the favourite of Fortune, he was to remember him to whom she had denied her simpers, and bestow upon me the most mediocre of the salmons, since I was desirous to make a polite offering to the amiable daughter of my host and hostess.

And with munificent generosity he presented me with the largest of the trio, which, with great jubilation, I endeavoured to carry off under my arm, though severely baffled by the extreme slipperiness with which (even after its decease) it repeatedly wallowed in dust, until someone, perceiving my fix, good-naturedly instructed me how to carry it by perforating its head with a piece of string.

I found Miss WEE-WEE in a secluded garden seat at the back of the Manse, incommoded, as usual, by the society of Mister CRUM. "Sir," I said, addressing him politely (for I was extremely anxious for his departure, since I could not well present my salmon to Miss WEE-WEE and request the *quid-pro-quo* of her affection in his presence), "accept my gratitude for the usufruct of your rod, which has produced magnificent fruit. You will find the instrument leaning against the palings of the front garden." And with this I made secret signals to Miss WEE-WEE that she was to dismiss him; but she remained bashful, and he seemed totally unaware that he was the drug of the market!

At last, weary of concealing my captured salmon any longer behind the small of my back, I was about to inform Mister CRUM that he had Miss LOUISA'S permission to absent himself, when she broke the silence by informing me that, as the old familiar friend of both parties, I was to be the first to hear a piece of news—to wit, that DONALD (Mister C.'s baptismal appellation) and she were just become the engaged couple!

I was so overcome by grief and indignation at her perfidious duplicity (since she had frequently encouraged me in my mockeries of her admirer's uncouthness and rusticity), that I stuck in the throat, and then flung the salmon violently across a boundary hedge into a yard of poultry.

"Madam," I said, "that fish was to have been laid at your feet as the visible pledge of my devotion. You have not only lost the gift of a splendid salmon, but have thrown away the heart of a well-educated native B.A. and Member of the Bar! And you have gained—hoity toity! What? Why, a Scotch Bun!"

But almost immediately I was taken by violent remorse for my presumption, and shed the tears of contrition, entreating forgiveness—nay, more, I scrambled through a hole in a very thorny hedge, and, recovering the salmon (which had not had time to become very severely henpecked), I begged them to accept it between them as a token of my esteem and good wishes, which they joyfully consented to do. I had expected that my worthy host and hostess would have shared my astounded disappointment on hearing of their daughter's engagement; but, on the contrary, they received the news with smiling complacency.

It appears that Mister CRUM, though endowed with a somewhat sheepish and bucolical exterior, is of tip-top Scottish caste and lineage, and the landed proprietor.

I am not to deny the attractiveness of such qualities, though I had hitherto been under the Fool's Paradise of an impression that they would have infinitely preferred this humble self as a son-in-law.

However, I am now emerging from my doleful

dumps, with the reflection that, after all, it is contrary to common-sense to drain the cup of misery to the dregs for so totally inadequate a cause as the ficklety of any feminine!

Mr Jabberjee is unavoidably compelled to return to town, thereby affording his Solicitor the inestimable benefit of his personal assistance. An apparent attempt to pack the Jury.

XXVII

THE Public will be astounded at the news (which came with the perfect novelty of a surprise upon this insignificant self) that I have ceased to be the cherished guest beneath the hired Scottish roof of Mister LEOFRIC ALLBUTT-INNETT and his bucksome lady.

It fell out after this fashion.

One fine September morning, when I was accoutring myself in order to go out and hunt the robert (N.B. a genuine local Scotticism for individuals belonging to the rabbit genius), there came to me my young friend HOWARD, who was to teach my young idea how to shoot, in great gloom, asking me if it would take me a prolonged period to pack up my *impedimenta*.

I replied that I could do the trick instantaneously, inquiring the reason for his question.

"Because," said he, "if I were you, I should have a wire requiring me to come up to London at once."

"From my solicitor?" I inquired. "Is he then desirous of consulting with me?"

My friend answered me that it was the one object of his present existence.

"In that case," said I, rather spiritedly, "let him come up here, since I am not a mountain that I should obey the becking call of any Mahomet. Moreover, I am impatient to achieve the destruction of some Scottish roberts."

"If you will take my advice," he said, "you will grant them a reprieve, and make a scarcity of yourself. There is a train for Glasgow which you can just catch. I wouldn't distress the Mater and Governor by any farewells, you know."

"But," I objected, "I am not even in receipt of any telegram. Nor can I possibly omit the etiquette of a ceremonious leave-taking with your honourable parents."

"Just as you please," replied he. "Just now the Governor and Mater are in the front sitting-room, engaged in perusing the back numbers of your precious 'Jossers and Tidlers' or whatever you call 'em, which have been thoughtfully forwarded by a relative. I don't think I'd disturb them."

"Are they so hugely interested in the performances of my unassuming *penna?*" I cried, with the gratified simpering of a flattered.

"It looked like it when I left the room," said he; "the Mater was very near rolling on the

oilcloth, and the Governor dancing and foaming from his mouth. What an awfully old ass you have been, JAB, to go and blurt out everything in print—about your breach of promise case, and getting to know us, and—worst of all—being merely a bogey prince. Naturally, we don't care about being made to look fools. The dear old Mater, you know, is one of those simple, trusting natures that, if they once discover they have been taken in by a sham title, why, they kick up the row of a deuce! And, as for the Governor, he's the sort of old retiring chap that has a downright loathing of publicity, when it makes him ridiculous. If he came across you just now, there's really no saying what he mightn't do. He's such a devilishly hot-tempered old boy!"

I did not comprehend the reasons for such exuberant anger, but, of course, young HOWARD insisted so urgently on physical dangers to myself if I delayed, that I hastened stealthily to my room by a backstair, and flinging my *paraphernalia* with incredible despatch into a portmanteau, was so fortunate as to convey it out of the house without attracting the invidious attention of my host and hostess, who were probably still occupied in foaming and rolling upon the carpet like angry waves of the sea.

Young HOWARD accompanied me to the station, though blaming me as the cause of his embroilment with his progenitors, who, it seems,

BABOO CHUCKERBUTTY RAM.

had insisted—quite unjustly—that he must have known from the first that my nobility was merely a brevet rank; and Miss WEE-WEE bade me farewell with a soft and perfectly ladylike cordiality, being too grieved by my departure to make any allusion to the head and front of my offending.

Now I am once more in London, paying daily visits of several hours to the office of my solicitor, in order to assist him in the preparation of my brief.

The other day, Baboo JALPANYBHOY and Baboo CHUCKERBUTTY RAM attended for the purpose of arranging their evidence, when I regret to say the former made a rather paltry exhibition of himself, being declared by Mr SMARTLE himself to be totally incompetent to prove anything whatever material to the case, and I am therefore resolved to refuse him admission to the witness-box.

I am more hopeful of Mr CHUCKERBUTTY RAM, who, I think, after diligent coaching from myself, may be induced to restrain his natural garrulity, and speak no more than is set down for him, which is simply that I have already, in his presence, contracted matrimony with a juvenile native, and that the laws of my country entitle me to marry several more.

This is in support of one of my most subtle pleadings of defence, to wit, that I have already offered to marry the plaintiff according to my

country's laws, but that she did definitely decline such a marriage as polygamous (which it is indubitably liable to become at any moment), consequently, that my said contract is nilled by mutual consent.

Mr SMARTLE was of the opinion that the plaintiff's solicitors would move to strike out such a pleading as bad in law, since it is no defence to an action for breach of promise that the defendant is already the Benedick. Fortunately they have omitted to do this, and I anticipate exciting excessive admiration in Court by the ingenuity of my arguments from Analogy, Common Sense, Roman Law, &c.

My said solicitor has also communicated with Hon'ble Sir CHETWYND CUMMERBUND, to inquire if he would consent to appear as a witness to my dependent filial condition, and entire lack of the sinews of war; which, with fatherly kindness, he has agreed to do, and, as he rather humorously puts it, convince the jury that I am the good riddance of bad rubbish.

Now the decks are cleaned for action, and all is ready for the forensic logomachy as soon as it may please Providence and some associate in the Queen's Bench Division to place the suit of *Mankletow* v. *Jabberjee* in the list of causes for the day.

My solicitor's advice, which I shall very probably adopt, is to keep as close as pos-

sible to the issues, and more especially to the point that, if I gave any promise to marry at all, it was extorted from me by threats of bodily violence which reduced me to a blue funkiness.

Also he recommends that I am not to attempt any golden-mouthed eloquence, thereby making the lamentable exhibit of a most stupendous ignorance of human nature!

For what can melt the stony hearts of men, causing them to bellow like an ox and become tender as chickens, or what can rouse them to Indignation, Approval, Contempt, Wonderment, and every other known sentiment as required, so effectively as the trumpeting tongue of oratorical eloquence!

All I can aver is that, if I am not to be permitted to draw the glittering sword of my tongue from the scabbard of my mouth, I shall infallibly, in sheer sickishness at such short-sighted folly, throw up my brief!

I must not omit to say that if any of my fellow-colleagues on this periodical (of course including Hon'ble Editor) should be anxious to become eye-witnesses of my forensic *début*, I shall be overjoyed to procure their admission and will instruct the Usher that they are to be awarded the seats of honour. Perhaps it might even be feasible for two or three of them to obtain appointments as jurymen.

If so, let them not turn the deaf ear to the gentle wheezings of their *esprit de corps*, but remember that it is not the custom for one eagle to peck another in his optics.

Mankletow v. *Jabberjee. Notes taken by Mr Jabberjee in Court during the proceedings.*

XXVIII

Queen's Bench Court, No.—. 10.20 A.M.

THE eventful morn of my trial for Breach of Promise has at length arrived, and I am resolved to jot down on the exterior of my brief such tittles as take place. I have taken my seat in Court on one of the benches reserved for long-robed juniors; in my immediate rear being my solicitor, SIDNEY SMARTLE, Esq., who will officiate as my Remembrancer and Friend in Need.

In the Great Hall below I had the pleasure to encounter Miss JESSIMINA and that worthy Madam her Mamma, being prepared to greet them with effusive kindness, and assure them I was only a hostile in my professional capacity. Whether they were struck with awe by the unaccustomed majesty of my appearance in brand-new wig, bands, &c., in which I am fresh as a daisy, and fine as a carrot fresh scraped, or whether they simply did not recognise me in the disguisement of such toggeries, I am not to decide—but they passed by without responding visibly to my salutations.

10.25.—A stout, large Q.C., with luxuriant cheek-whiskers has just entered the row in front. Mister SMARTLE whispers to me that this is WITHERINGTON, whom I refused to engage, and who is now in opposition.

I have taken the undue liberty to pluck him by the sleeve and introduce myself in straightforward English style to his honourable notice, acquainting him that his unfortunate client had a very flimsy case, and was not deserving of success, while myself was a meritorious Native Neophyte, whose entire fortune was impaled on a stake, and urging him not to show too windy a temper to such a shorn lamb as his petitioner.

However, he has declined rather peremptorily to lend me his ears, nor can I induce his learned junior, who is my next neighbour, to show me any fraternal kindness. My said solicitor is highly indignant at my treatment, and warns me in an undertone that I am not to make any further overtures to such stuck-up individuals.

10.30.—Hon'ble Mister Justice HONEYGALL enters in highly dignified fashion. He is of a bland, benignant, and intensely clean aspect, which uplifts my downfallen heart, for it is obvious, from his benevolent and smiling bow to myself that he already feels a paternal interest in my achieving the conquest of my spurs.

The jury are taking the oath. Whether any of my co-contributors to *Punch* are among them I cannot discover, since they do not vouchsafe

"FRESH AS A DAISY, AND FINE AS A CARROT FRESH SCRAPED."

to encourage me by the freemasonry of even a surreptitious simper. But this is perhaps occasioned by over prudence.

The learned junior on my right has risen, and in shockingly bald and barren verbiage has stated the issues which are to be tried, and, being evidently no Heaven-born orator, sits abruptly down, completely gravelled for lack of a more copious vocabulary. A poor tongue-tied devil of a chap whom I regard with pity!

WITHERINGTON, Q.C., is addressing the jury. He is not a tongue-tied, but he speaks in a colloquial, commonplace sort of fashion which does not shed a very brilliant lustre upon boasted British advocacy.

Though of an unromantic obesity, it appears from the excessive eulogies he lavishes upon JESSIMINA that he is already the tangled fly in the web of her feminine enchantments. What a pity that such a prominent barrister should be so unskilled in seeing through such a millstone as the female heart!

He is persisting in making most incorrect and uncomplimentary allusions to my undeserving self, which it is impossible that I am to suffer without rising to repudiate with voluble indignation! However, though he makes bitter complaints of my interruptions, he does me the honour to refer to me as his friend, for which I thank him with a gratified fervour, assuring him that I reciprocate his esteem.

Hon'ble Judge has just tendered me the kindly and golden advice that, unless I sit down and remain hermetically sealed, the case will infallibly continue for ever and anon, and that I am not to advance my interests by disregarding the customary etiquettes of the Bar.

11.5.—JESSIMINA is giving her testimony. Indubitably she has greatly improved in her physical appearance since I was a resident of Porticobello House, and her habiliments are as fashionably ladylike (if not more so) than Miss WEE-WEE'S own! Alack! that she should relate her story with so many departures from ordinary veracity. Her pulchritude and well-assumed timidity have captivated even the senile Judge, for, after I have risen and vehemently contradicted her in various unimportant details, he has actually barked at me that, unless I wait until it is my turn to cross-examine he will take some very severe measure with me at the rising of the Court! A pretty specimen of judicial impartiality!

1.30 P.M.—The Court has risen for lunch at the conclusion of a rather severe cross-examination by myself of the fair plaintiff, and, not being oppressed by pangs of hunger, I have leisure to record the result—which, owing to the partisanship of Hon'ble Bench, the disgracefully complicated state of the laws of Evidence, and Miss JESSIMINA'S ingenuity in returning entirely wrong answers to my searching interrogatories,

did not attain to the sanguine level of my expectations.

For instance, when I asked her whether it was not the fact that I was notoriously deficient in physical courageousness, she made the unexpected reply that she had not observed it, and that I had frequently described to her my daring achievements in sticking wild pigs and shooting man-eating tigers.

Also she entirely refused to admit that the turquoise and gold ring I had given her was not in token of our betrothal, but merely to compensate her for not being invited as well as myself to a certain fashionable dinner-party; and the Judge (interrupting in the most unwarrantable manner) said that, as he did not understand that I seriously denied the existence of an engagement to marry, he was unable to perceive the bearings of my query.

Again, I reminded her of her mention of the gift of a china model of Poet SHAKSPEARE'S birthplace, and required her—on her oath—to answer whether it had not been originally intended for another lady, and whether, having accidentally seated myself upon it, I had not decided to bestow the *disjecta membra* upon herself instead.

To which she replied, with artfully simulated emotion, that all she knew was that I had assured her at the time that the said piece of china had been expressly purchased for herself as a

souvenir of my ardent affection, and she had accepted it as such, and carefully restored it with some patent cement.

Before this the Judge had asked me how I could expect the plaintiff to know what was passing in the tortuous recesses of my own mind, and informed her that she need not answer such a ridiculous question unless she pleased. But she did please, and her answer was received with applause, which, however, the Bench perceiving, though tardily, that I was entitled to some protection, did declare in angry tones that it was on no account to be permitted.

Next I inquired whether it was not true that she was of a flirtatious disposition, and addicted to laugh and talk vivaciously with the gentlemen-boarders, and whether I had not earnestly remonstrated with her upon such conduct. Here WITHERINGTON, Q.C., bounded on to his feet, and protested that I was not entitled to put this question now, since I had not dared to allege in my letters or pleadings that I had breached my promise owing to any misconduct of plaintiff. But, instead of submitting to such objection, JESSIMINA answered in mellifluous accents that she had never manifested more than ordinary civility towards any gentleman-boarder, but that I had displayed passionate jealousy of them all prior to my engagement—though never since, because she had never afforded the slightest excuse for remonstrances.

Whereupon she was again flooded with tears, which stirred my heart with tender commiseration; for her maidenly distress did only increase her charms to infinity. And the Judge, feeling fatherly sympathy for myself, observed very kindly that I had got my answer, which he hoped might do me much good. For which good wish I thanked him gratefully; and the Court was again dissolved in senseless cachinnations!

Next I cross-questioned her as to her refusal of my offer to marry on the ground that I was already the husband of one infant wife, and whether it was not the fact. She responded that I had referred her to Mr CHUCKERBUTTY RAM for corroboration of my story, and that he had informed her that my said wife was a *post mortem.*

Here I cleverly took the legal objection that what Mr RAM said was not evidence, and warned her to be careful, while the Hon'ble Judge partly upheld my contention, remarking that it was evidence that a conversation was held, but not of the truth of the facts stated in such conversation, thereby showing clearly that he did not credit her story.

Upon the whole, I am confident that I have at least silenced the guns of WITHERINGTON, Q.C., for upon the conclusion of my cross-examination, he admitted that he had no further questions to ask the plaintiff.

My solicitor says I shall have to buck myself up if I am to reduce the damages to any reasonable amount, and that he had been desirous from the first to brief WITHERINGTON. But this is to croak like a raven, for the cross-examining is, after all, of very minor importance compared to the Gift of the Gab—in which I am notoriously *nulli secundus*.

2.15 P.M.—The Court has returned. WITHERINGTON'S Junior has called JESSIMINA'S mother, whom I shall presently have the bounden but rather painful duty to cross-examine sharply.

Already I experience serious sinkings in stomach department. *Sursum corda!* I must buck it up.

Further proceedings in the Case of Mankletow v. *Jabberjee. Mr Jabberjee's Opening for the Defence.*

XXIX

Queen's Bench Court, No.—, 2.40 P.M.

I HAVE just resumed my seat after a rather searching examination of Madam MANKLETOW, as will appear from the notes of her evidence kindly taken by my solicitor:—

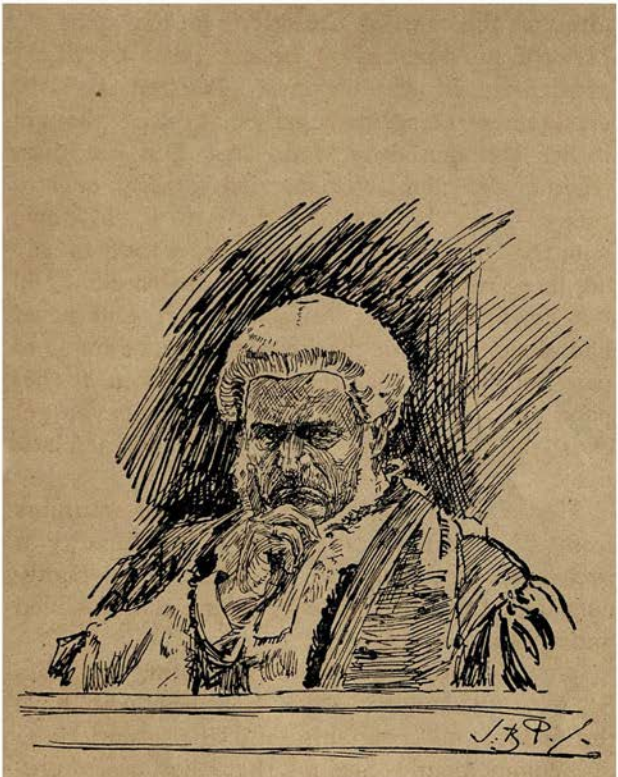
MY SOLICITOR'S SAID NOTES.

Mrs MARTHA MANKLETOW (*formidable old party—all bugles and bombazine*). Would certainly describe her establishment as 'select'; all of her male boarders perfect gentlemen—except defendant. Was never anxious to secure him for her daughter—on the contrary, would have much preferred her son-in-law white. Gave her consent because of the passionate attachment he professed for plaintiff. Nothing to her whether he was of princely rank or not. He appeared to be very well able to support her daughter, which was the chief thing. Had never threatened defendant with personal chastisement from other boarders if he denied any engagement. Did say that if he meant nothing serious

after all the marked attentions he had paid the plaintiff, he deserved to be cut dead by all the gentlemen in the house. Insisted on the engagement being made public at once ; thought it her bounden duty to do so. Did not know whether defendant was married already, or how many wives he was entitled to in his own country—he had taken good care not to say anything about all that when he proposed. Did not consider him a desirable match, and never had done, but thought he ought to be made to pay heavily for his heartless behaviour to her poor unprotected child, who would never get over the slight of being jilted by a black man. . . . .

Here I sat down, amidst suppressed murmurs from the Court of indignation and sympathy at such gross unmannerly insults to a highly educated Indian University man and qualified native barrister.

3.15.—More witnesses for plaintiff, viz., Miss SPINK and sundry select boarders, who have testified to my courtship and the notoriety of my engagement. Seeing that they were predetermined not to answer favourably to myself, I tore a leaf out of Mister WITHERINGTON'S book, and said that I had no questions to ask. . . . The plaintiff's junior has just sat down, with the announcement that that is his case. I am now to turn the tables by dint of rhetorical loquacity.



MR JUSTICE HONEYGALL.

The annexed report, though sadly meagre and doing very scanty justice to the occasion, is furnished by my friend young HOWARD, who was present in Court at the time. . . . .

Jab. (*in a kind of sing-song*). May it please your venerable lordship and respectable gentlemen of the jury, I am in the very similar predicament of another celebrated native gentleman and well-known character in the dramatic works of your immortal *littérateur* Poet SHAKSPEARE. I allude to OTHELLO on the occasion of his pleading before the Duke and other potent, grave, and reverent signiors of Venice, in a speech which I shall commence by quoting in full——

Mr Justice Honeygall. One moment, Mr JABBERJEE, I am always reluctant to interfere with Counsel, but it may save my time and that of the jury if I remind you that the illustration you propose to give us is hardly as happy as it might be. The head and front of OTHELLO'S offending, unless I am mistaken, was that he had married the lady of his affections, whereas in *your* case——

Jab. (*plaintively*). Your lordship, it is not humanly possible that I can exhibit even ordinary eloquence if I am to be interrupted by far-fetched and frivolous objections. The story of OTHELLO——

Mr Justice H. What the jury want to hear is not OTHELLO'S story, but yours, Sir, and your

proper course is to go into the witness-box at once, and give your version of the facts as simply and straightforwardly as you can. When you have given your own evidence and called any witnesses you may wish to call, you will have an opportunity of addressing the jury, and exhibiting the eloquence on which you apparently place so much reliance.

[*Here poor old* JAB *bundles off to the witness-box, and takes some outlandish oath or other with immense gusto, after which he starts telling the Jury a long rambling rigmarole, and is awfully riled when the old Judge pulls him up, which he does about every other minute. This is the sort of thing that goes on :—*

Jab. At this, Misters of the Jury, I, being but a pusillanimous and no Leviathan of valour——

The Judge. Not so fast, Sir, not so fast. Follow my pen. I've not got down half what you said before that. (*Reads laboriously from his notes.*) "In panicstricken apprehension of being severely assaulted *à posteriori*." Who do you say threatened to assault you in that manner—the plaintiff's mother?

Jab. I have already had the honour to inform your lordship that I was utterly intimidated by the savage threats of the plaintiff's mother that,

unless I consented to become the betrothed, she would summon certain able-bodied athletic boarders to batter and kick my unprotected person, and consequently, not being a Leviathan——

The Judge. No one has ever suggested that you are an animal of that description, Sir. Have the goodness to keep to the point. (*Reads as he writes.*) "I was so intimidated by threats of plaintiff's mother that she would have me severely kicked by third parties if I refused, that I consented to become engaged to plaintiff." Is *that* what you say?

Jab. (*beaming*). Your lordship's acute intellect has comprehended my *pons asinorum* with great intelligence.

The Judge (*looking at him under his spectacles*). Umph! Well, go on. What next?

[*So old* JAB *goes on gassing away, at such a deuce of a rate that the Judge gives up all idea of taking notes, and sits staring at* JAB *in resigned disgust.* (*It was spell-bound attentiveness.*—H. B. J.) JAB *WILL spout and* WON'T *keep to the point; but, all the same, I fancy, somehow, he's getting round the Jury. He's such a jolly innocent kind of old ass, and they like him because he's no end of sport. The plaintiff's a devilish fine girl, and gave her evidence uncommonly well; but, unless*

WITHERINGTON *turns up again, I believe old* JAB *will romp in a winner, after all! I haven't taken down anything else, except his wind-up, when of course he managed to get in a speech.*

Jab. Believe me, gentlemen of the jury, this is simply the barefaced attempt to bleed and mulct a poor impecunious Indian. For it is incredible that any English female, of genteel upbringings and the lovely and beauteous appearance which you have all beheld in this box, it is incredible, I say, that she should seriously desire to become a mere unconsidered unit in a bevy of Indian brides! How is she possibly to endure a domestic existence exposed to the slings and arrows of a perpetual gorilla warfare from various native aunts and sisters-in-law, or how is she to reconcile her dainty and fastidious stomach, after the luscious and appetising fare of a Bayswater boarding-house, to simple, unostentatious, and frequently repulsive Indian eatables? No, Misters of the jury, as warm-hearted noble-minded English gentlemen, you will never condemn an unfortunate and industrious native graduate and barrister to make a cripple of his career, and burden his friends and his families with such a bone of contention as a European better half, who will infallibly plunge him into the pretty pickle of innumerable family jars! I shall now vacate the witness-box in favour of my

intimate friend and fatherly benefactor, Hon'ble Sir CHETWYND CUMMERBUND, who will tell you——

The Judge (*rising*). Before we have the pleasure of seeing Sir CHETWYND here, Mr JABBERJEE, there is a little formality you appear to have overlooked. The plaintiff's counsel will probably wish before you leave the box to put a few questions to you in cross-examination, and that must stand over till to-morrow. (*At this, old Jab's jaw falls several holes.*)

NOTE BY MR JABBERJEE.—*Hereford Road, Bayswater.*—I am excessively gratified by the result of my first day's trial, being already the established favourite and chartered libertine of the whole Court, who split their sides at my slightest utterances. So I am no longer immeasurably alarmed by the prospect of being crossly examined—especially since WITHERINGTON, Q.C., has abandoned his brief in despair to a tongue-tied junior, who is incompetent to exclaim Bo! to a goose. Indeed, I have some thoughts of declining haughtily to be interrogated by a mere underling.

The only fly in the ointment of my success is the utter indifference of JESSIMINA to my aforesaid triumphs. At the termination of the hearing to-day, I beheld her so deeply engrossed in smiling and cordial converse with the smartly-attired curly-headed young solicitor who is

acting on her behalf that she was totally unconscious of my vicinity!

Alackaday! *varium et mutabile semper fœmina!*

Mankletow v. *Jabberjee* (*part heard.*) *Mr Jabberjee finds cross-examination much less formidable than he had anticipated.*

XXX

IT is now the second day of my celebrated case, which is such a transcendental success that already the Court is tight as a drum, while a vast disappointed crowd is barricading implor-ingly at the doors!

I was about to harangue these unfortunates, assuring them I was not responsible for their exclusion, and promising to exert my utmost influence with the Hon'ble Judge that they were all to be admitted.

But my solicitor, seizing me by the forearm, hurried me through the entrance with the friendly recommendation that I was not to be the bally-fool.

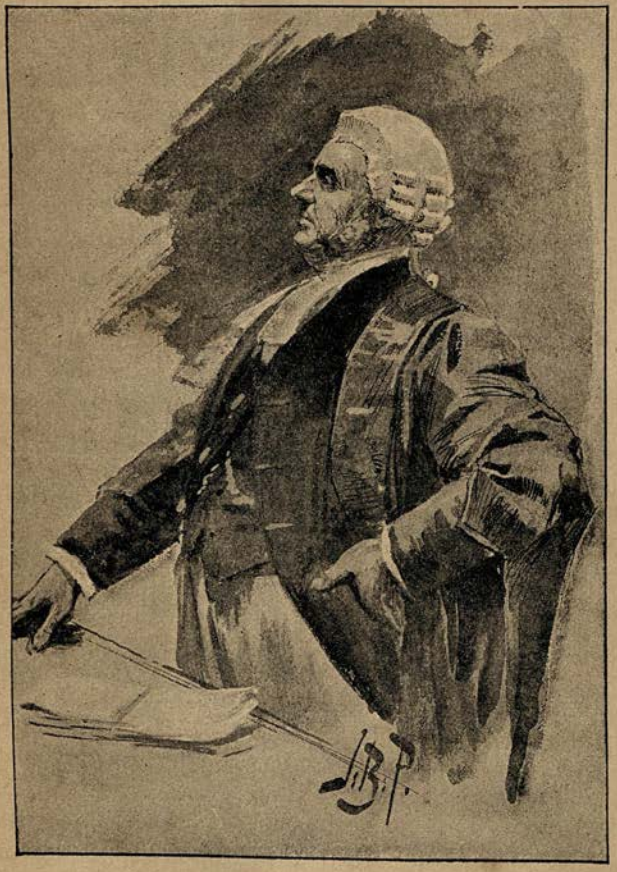
In the trough I perceive JESSIMINA seated, in a hat even more resplendently becoming than her yesterday head-dress, and I am not a little puffed with pride to be proceeded against by a plaintiff of such a stylish and elegant appearance.

10.25 A.M.—After all, WITHERINGTON, Q.C., has paid me the marked compliment of turning

up to personally conduct my cross-examination. At which SMARTLE, Esq., becomes lugubrious, averring that he is capable of turning my inside out in no time unless I am preciously careful. But, knowing that such inhuman barbarities are not feasible in civilised regions, I enter the box with a serene and smiling countenance. . . .

Later. — I am unspeakably delighted with the urbanity (on the whole) with which I have been cross-examined. For, to my wonderment, WITHERINGTON, Q.C., commenced with displaying a respectful and sympathetic interest in my career, &c., which rendered me completely at my ease, and though on occasions he did suddenly manifest inquisitorial severity, I soon discovered that his anger was mere wind from a tea-pot, and that he was in secret highly gratified by the nature of my replies. And for the most part he had the great condescension to treat me with a kind and facetious familiarity.

I had privately commissioned a shorthanded acquaintance of mine with instructions to take down nothing but my answers, but with inconceivable doltishness he has done the exact converse, and transcribed merely the utterances of Mister WITHERINGTON! However, as I do not accurately recall my responses, I am to insert the report here *pro tanto*, trusting to the ingenuity of the public to read between the lines.



WITHERINGTON Q.C.

HERE FOLLOWS THE REPORT.

Mr Witherington, Q.C. Well, Mr JABBERJEE, so it seems that it is all a mistake about your being a Prince, eh? . . . . And, however such an idea may have originated, *you* never represented yourself as a Rajah, or anything of the kind? . . . . I was sure you would say so. You have such a high regard for truth, and such a deep sense of the obligation of an oath, that you are incapable of a deliberate falsehood at any time — may I take that for granted? . . . . Very glad to hear it. And of course, Mr JABBERJEE, it was no fault of yours if people chose to assume, from a certain magnificence in your appearance and way of living and so on, that you must be of high rank in your own country? . . . . But, though you don't set up to be a Prince, you are, I believe, a recent acquisition to the honourable profession of which we are both members? . . . . And also a journalist of some distinction, are you not? . . . . Indeed? I congratulate you—a highly respectable periodical. And no doubt the proprietors have shown a proper appreciation of the value of your services, in a pecuniary sense? . . . . Really? You are indeed to be envied, Mr JABBERJEE! Not many young barristers can rely upon making such an income by their pen while they are waiting for the briefs to come in. May I ask if you intend to practice

in this country? . . . . The Calcutta Bar, eh? Then I suppose you can count upon influence out there? . . . . Your father a *Mooktear*, is he? I'm afraid I don't know what that is exactly. . . . A solicitor? *Now* I understand. So he will give you cases—in which I am sure you will distinguish yourself. But you'll have to work hard, won't you? . . . . I thought so. No more pig-sticking or tiger-shooting, eh? . . . . That's a drawback, isn't it? You're passionately devoted to tiger-shooting, aren't you? Unless I'm mistaken, you first won the plaintiff's admiration by the vivid manner in which you described your "moving accidents by flood and field"—another parallel between you and OTHELLO, eh? Well, tell me, I'm no sportsman myself—but it's rather a thrilling moment, isn't it, when a tiger is trying to climb up your elephant, and get inside the—what do you call it—howlah?—oh, *howdah*, to be sure; thank you, very much. . . . So I should have imagined. Still, I suppose, when you're used to it, even that wouldn't shake your nerve to any appreciable extent. You would bowl over your tiger at close quarters without turning a hair, would you not? . . . Just so. A great gift, presence of mind. And pig-sticking, now—isn't a boar rather an awkward customer to tackle? . . . . "You never found him so"? But suppose you miss him with your spear, and he charges your horse? . . . . Ah, you're a

mighty hunter, Mr JABBERJEE, I perceive! Ever shoot any elephants? . . . . *No* elephants? That's a pleasure to come, then. Now, about your relations with the plaintiff prior to your engagement — you were a good deal in her company, weren't you? . . . . Well, you constantly escorted her to various places of amusement, come? . . . . Yes, yes; I am quite aware a *chaperon* was always present. We are both agreed that my client has acted throughout with the most scrupulous propriety— but you liked being in her society, didn't you? . . . . Exactly so, and, at that time at all events, you admired her extremely? . . . . "Merely as a friend," eh? no idea of proposing? Well, just tell us once more how it was you came to engage yourself. . . . You were afraid your landlady would summon a boarder and ask him to give you a kicking? . . . . And the prospect of being kicked terrified you to such an extent that you were willing to promise anything—is *that* your story? . . . . But you are a man of iron nerve, you know, you've just been giving us a description of your performances in the jungle. How did you come to be so alarmed by a boarder, when the attack of the fiercest tiger or wild boar never made you turn a hair? . . . . But that is what you gave us to understand just now, wasn't it? . . . . Then do you tell his lordship and the jury now that, as a matter of fact, you never shot a solitary tiger or speared a single boar in your

life? Why didn't you say so at once, Sir. . . . Do you consider a misrepresentation of that kind a mere trifle? . . . . In spite of the fact that you have solemnly sworn to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth? . . . . Very well, Sir, I will take your answer. Now, just look at this letter of yours. (Your lordship has a copy of the correspondence. . . . Yes, it is all admitted, my lord.) I'll read it to you. (*Reads it.*) Now, Sir, is it the fact that you ever actually consulted the gentleman who enjoys the distinction of being astrologer to your family upon your marriage with the plaintiff? Be careful what you say. . . . And did he ever forbid you to contract such an alliance? . . . Then was there a word of truth in all that? . . . . I thought as much. Let me read you another letter. (*He reads.*) Here, you see, you make quite another excuse. You are already married, and can only offer the plaintiff the position of a rival wife, or "*sateen*," as you call it. Have you ever contracted an infant marriage in India? . . . Oh, that *is* true, is it? But why, when you were paying these attentions to the plaintiff, did it never occur to you to mention the fact that you were a married man? . . . . "You don't know?" May it not have been because you were a widower? Was your infant wife alive or dead when you wrote this letter? . . . . Then why did you write of her as if she were alive? . . . . I quite believe *that* — but why

were you so anxious to break it off just then? . . . . Well, when you were cross-examining the plaintiff you asked her about a certain china ornament you had given her, which seems to have been originally intended for another young lady. We needn't mention her name here—but you made her acquaintance some time after your engagement, didn't you? . . . . And since you left Porticobello House, you have seen a good deal of her, eh? . . . . You were a great admirer of hers, weren't you? . . . . I'm not asking you whether she is engaged to a Scotch gentleman at the present moment—I'm putting it to you that, at the time you were writing these letters to the plaintiff, you had already formed the conclusion that this other young lady was more deserving of the honour of being the second Mrs JABBERJEE. . . . . I am not suggesting that you could help it—but wasn't it so? . . . . Very well—that is all I have to ask you Mr JABBERJEE. You can go. . . . .

I must not omit to record that my replies and the reading of my letters did excite frequent and vociferous merriment, and in other respects I have testified so exhaustively that my solicitor informs me it is not worth a candle to call any further witnesses—especially as Hon'ble CUMMERBUND has intimated that he prefers to blow unseen, and as for Baboo CHUCKERBUTTY RAM, he, it seems, has of course been seized by such

violent indisposition that he was compelled to leave the Court.

So I am now to deliver one more brief oration, which will infallibly secure me the plerophory of the jury and exalt my head to the skies as Cock of the Roost.

Only I regret that JESSIMINA'S visage is now completely invisible to me, being obscured by the dimensions of her hat, also that she should carry on such protracted confabulations with her curly-headed professional adviser—which is surely lacking in most ordinary respect for myself and Hon'ble Justice HONEYGALL!

Mankletow v. *Jabberjee* (*continued*). *The Defendant brings his Speech to a somewhat unexpected conclusion, and Mr Witherington, Q.C., addresses the Jury in reply.*

XXXI

MY aforesaid shorthanded acquaintance has very fortunately preserved the literal transcript of my concluding oration, which will afford a feeble idea of the grandiloquence of my loquacity.—H. B. J.

VERBATIM REPORT (*unofficial*).

Baboo Jab. May it please your mighty honour and great notorious gentlemen on the jury, it must present a strange and funny appearance to behold a young Indian B.A., provided with a big education and the *locus standi* of barrister-at-law, crawling humbly towards your footstools as a suppliant, and already I perceive from your benevolent and smirking visages that your hearts are favourably inclined towards your unfortunate son, and that you are too deeply imbued with serpentine wisdom to be at all bamfoozled by the *ad captandum* charms of feminine cajoleries. Indeed, I am a poor penniless chap, if not almost completely dead for want of funds, and if I had

only been able to call my revered and fatherly benefactor, Hon'ble Sir CUMMERBUND, he would infallibly have testified—

The Judge. As you did not think proper—no doubt for excellent reasons—to put Sir CHETWYND in the box when you could have done so, Mr JABBERJEE, I shall most certainly not allow you to make any comments now upon the evidence he might or might not have given.

Baboo J. I beg to knuckle very submissively to your lordship's argument. The fact is, that the said Sir CUMMERBUND, on hearing my answers when I was acting in the capacity of a harrowed toad under my friend WITHERINGTON'S cross-examination, very handsomely stated that I had left nothing for him to say, and begged modestly that he might be excused. But indeed, Misters, I occupy but a very beggarly apartment in this Fools' Hotel of a world, and it is the moral impossibility for me to pay any damages whatever! Moreover, it is a well-authenticated fact that I am a shocking coward, and was induced to become affianced by haunting apprehensions of receiving a succession of severe kicks. For how, being suddenly put to my choice between being barbarously kicked and punched or acquiring a spruce and blooming bride, could I hesitate for a moment to accept the lesser of two evils? Nevertheless, I did remain uninterruptedly devoted to the plaintiff for many weeks—until I encountered a still

younger and more bewitching lady, who became the Polar Star to my compass-like heart. But, lack-a-daisy, Sirs! though I left no stones unturned to be off with my Old Love, I did not get on very fortunately with the New, seeing that she preferred an affluent young Scotch, whereby I am reduced to shedding tears in silence and solicitude between two stools! (*Roars of laughter.*) Misters, like the frog that was being lapidated by thoughtless juveniles, I reply: —"for you it may be facetious; but to myself it is a devilishly serious affair!" For, after beholding the plaintiff here and discovering that she had advanced rather than retrograded in physical attractiveness, I made cordial approaches to her, but she passed me by with a superciliously exalted nose! Gentlemen, it is a terrific piece of humbug for her to allege that her heart has been infernally lacerated by my unfaithfulness, when, at this very moment, instead of lending her ears to my brief and rambling oration, she is entirely engrossed in flirtatious converse with her curlypated juvenile solicitor! (*Sensation.*)

Witherington, Q.C. (*rising*). My lord, I really must protest. There is absolutely *no* justification for the defendant's outrageous insinuation. I am informed by Miss MANKLETOW that she simply asked the gentleman sitting next to her whether he had seen her smelling-salts!

The Judge. I fail to see, Mr JABBERJEE, what

advantage you can hope to gain by these highly irregular digressions. The plaintiff is under my immediate observation, and I have seen nothing in her conduct during the trial of which you have the smallest right to complain.

Bab. J. I am highly satisfied by your lordship's *obiter dictum.* Not being in such a coign of vantage as your honour's excellency, I was misled by the propinquity of heads viewed from the rear. Now, before again becoming a sedentary, I am to propose a decisive test of plaintiff's *bona fides* in desiring my insignificant self as a spouse. Herewith I beg humbly to have the honour of renewing my formal proposal of marriage, and moreover will pledge myself in most solemn and business-like style never on any account, whether so permitted by laws of country or *vice versâ*, to take to myself a single additional native wife in her lifetime. This handsome offer is genuine and without prejudice, and I will take leave to remind plaintiff, in the terms of a rather musty adage, that she is not too closely to inspect the mouth of such a gifted horse as myself. (*Great laughter, and some sensation in Court as* JABBERJEE *sits down.*)

Witherington, Q.C. Your lordship will see that this—ah—rather unforeseen development renders it necessary that I should ascertain the plaintiff's views before proceeding to reply. (*The Judge nods: breathless excitement in Court while the*

plaintiff's solicitor carries on an animated conversation with Mr W. *in undertones.*)

Witherington (*rising once more*). Gentlemen, I have, as it was my duty to do, consulted the plaintiff respecting the unusual course which the defendant has thought proper to take. Her answer to his proposal is the answer which I am sure you will feel is the only possible one in the circumstances. (JAB. *beams.*) The plaintiff, gentlemen, has undergone the severest ordeal a young woman of delicacy and refinement can be called upon to endure ("*Hear, hear!*" *from* JAB.), and out of that ordeal I think you will all agree she has come absolutely unscathed.

I need hardly say that she is incapable now of harbouring any unworthy sentiments of rancour or revenge. (JAB. *beams more effulgently still.*)

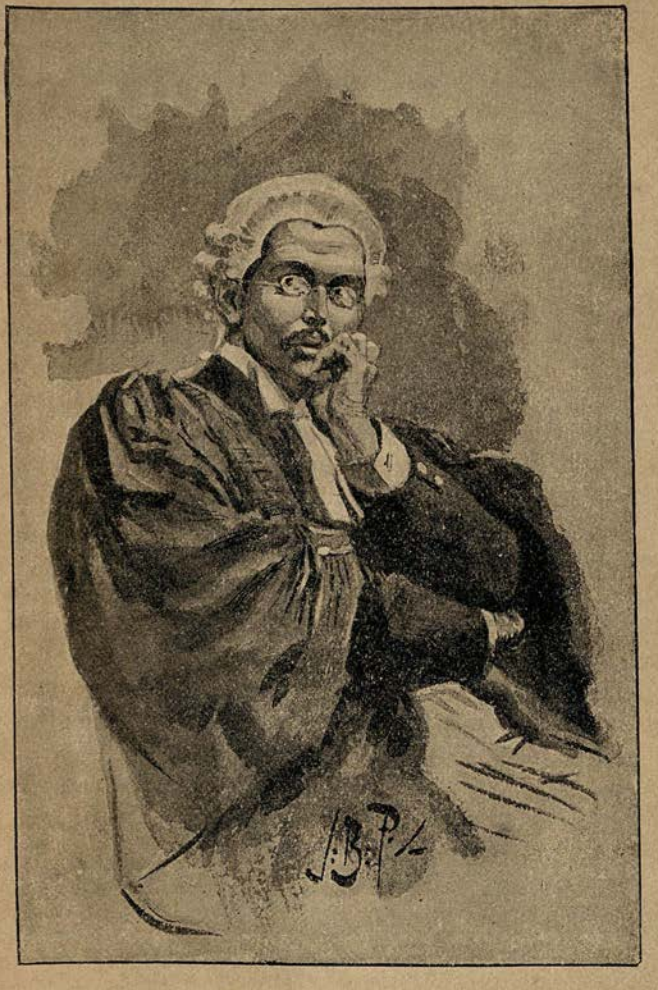
But, gentlemen, there are some injuries which, as you know, a woman may find herself able to excuse, to palliate, even to condone; but which she feels nevertheless must operate as an insuperable and impassable barrier between herself and the individual who could be capable of them! (JAB.'S *smile becomes a trifle less assured.*)

After the disgraceful and unmanly attempts the defendant has made to evade his obligations; his disingenuous defences; his insulting innuendoes; after the deplorable exhibition he has made of himself in that box; and especially after the sombre picture he himself has painted

of the domestic future he has to offer; after all this, I ask you, gentlemen, is it likely, is it possible, is it even conceivable that the plaintiff can retain any respect or affection for him, or have sufficient courage and confidence to entrust her happiness to such hands? (JAB.'S *face gradually lengthens.*)

Once, it is true, under the glamour of her own girlish illusions, she was ready to expatriate herself, to endure an alien existence, and strange manners and customs for his beloved sake; but now, now that her ideal is shattered, her dream dispelled,—now, it is too late! Gentlemen, my client's answer is—and it is one which will only command your increased respect:—"No. He has broken my heart, undermined my belief in human nature, cast a blight upon my existence. (Miss M. *sobs audibly, here, and* JAB. *is visibly affected.*) Much as I should like to recover my old belief in him, much as it would be to my worldly advantage to marry a wealthy Bengali barrister with talents and influence which are certain to lead to rapid promotion in his native land (JAB. *bows, and then shakes his head in protest*), he has made me suffer too much, I cannot accept him now!"

(*The learned Counsel then dealt exhaustively with various portions of the case, and concluded thus.*) Well, gentlemen, I shall not have to trouble you with many further remarks, but I will just say this before I sit down:—The



"JABBERJEE'S FACE GRADUALLY LENGTHENS."

defendant amongst innumerable other ingenious excuses, has pleaded for your indulgence on the score of poverty. He has the brazen effrontery to plead poverty, forsooth! after complacently admitting, in that box, that he is earning at this very moment an income by his pen alone that might be envied by many a hardworking English journalist! I do not say this by way of making any reflection upon the defendant; on the contrary, gentlemen, I consider it does credit to his ability and enterprise. (JAB. *bows again.*) But at the same time it disposes effectually of his allegation that he is without means, and indeed, leaving his literary gains entirely out of the question, it must have been obvious from what you have heard and seen of his manner of living in this country that he is amply provided with pecuniary resources. Bearing this in mind, gentlemen, I ask you to mark your sense of his heartless treatment of the plaintiff, and the mental and social injury she has suffered on his account, by awarding her substantial damages; not, I need scarcely say, in any spirit of vindictiveness, but as some compensation (however inadequate) for all she has gone through, and also as a warning to other ingratiating but unprincipled Orientals that they cannot expect to trifle with the artless affection of our generous, warmhearted English maidens without paying—aye, and paying dearly, too! for the amusement. (*He sits down amidst applause.*)

NOTE BY MR JABBERJEE.—Hon'ble Judge is to sum up after lunch. I am highly pained and disappointed that my friend WITHERINGTON should have shown himself a perfidious, and have taken the liberty as he quitted the Court to murmur the plaintive remonstrance of "*Et tu, Brute!*" into the cavity of his left ear.

My solicitor, SIDNEY SMARTLE, is of the opinion that my case is looking "a bit rocky," but that much will depend upon how the Judge sums up. What a pity that, owing to judicial red-tapery, I am prohibited from popping in upon him at lunch and importuning him to pronounce a decree in my favour!

Containing the conclusion of the whole matter, and (which many Readers will receive in a spirit of chastened resignation) Mr Jabberjee's final farewell.

XXXII

Queen's Bench Court, No.—, 2 P.M.

HON'BLE JUSTICE HONEYGALL is now summing-up, in such very nice, chatty, confidential style that it is impossible to hear one half of his observations, while the remainder is totally inaudible. . . . Nevertheless, I already gather that he regards the affair with the restricted narrowminded view that it is simply the question of damages. . . . He appears to be now discussing whether my testimony that I am of such excessive natural funkiness as to be intimidated by a few threats into my matrimonial engagement is humanly credible. . . . I cannot at all comprehend why, at his frequent references to my alleged tiger-slaughters—which, with shrewd commonsense sapience, he seems to consider mere ideally fabricated fibs and fanciful yarns—the whole Court should be so convulsed with unmeaning merriment, nor why so stern a Judge does not make any attempt to check such disorderly interruptions. . . .

So far as my imperfect hearing can ascertain, he has been instructing the jury that they may utterly dismiss from their minds my highly ingenious plea of inability to offer any other kind of matrimony than a polygamous union—surely, a very, very slipshod off-hand method of disposing of such a nice sharp quillet of the Law! . . . He is talking to them about my means, and has thrown out a rather apt suggestion that I may have been led by sheer vain-gloriousness and Oriental love of hyperbole into exaggerating my resources. . . . However, he "sees no reason to doubt my competence to pay a reasonable amount of damages"—an opinion with which I am not so pleased. "If the jury think me a gay sort of Hindoo deceiver, who has heartlessly trifled with the affections of a simple, unsuspecting English girl, that will lead them to award substantial damages. If, on the other hand, they consider myself an inexperienced Oriental ninnyhammer of a fellow, who has been entrapped into an engagement by an ambitious, artful young woman—why, that may incline them to inflict a merely nominal penalty." (But why, I should like to know, does a Judge, who is infinitely more capable than a dozen doltish juryman to express a decided opinion, thus put on the double-faced mask of ambiguity, and run with the hare and halloo with the hounds, like some Lukeworm from Laodicea?) . . . Now he

is mentioning "certain circumstances, which he is bound to tell the jury have made a strong impression on his own mind." . . . Alack, that, owing to the incorrigible mumbling of his diction, I cannot succeed in ascertaining what these said circumstances are! . . . He has begun (I think) to discourse concerning my latest offer of marriage in open Court. What a pity that hon'ble judges should not study to acquire at least ordinary proficiency in such a simple affair as Elocution!

"It may strike you, gentlemen, that if the plaintiff had any genuine affection for the defendant, or any actual intention of linking her lot with his, she would——" (the rest is a severe mumble!) "Or again, you may take into consideration——" (but precisely *what* they are to take is, to myself, a dumb show!). "Still, after making every possible allowance for the idealising effects of the tender passion upon the female judgment, I confess I find it a little difficult to persuade myself that——" (Again I am not in at the finish—but, from the bristling and tossing of JESSIMINA'S hat-plumes, I am in great hopes that it contained something complimentary to myself.) . . . He has just concluded with the observation that, "after what they have seen and heard of the defendant during the proceedings, the jury should find little difficulty in arriving at a fairly accurate estimate of the loss which a young lady of British birth and bringing-

up would sustain by her failure to secure such a husband."

From the last it is clear that his hon'ble lordship meant that, in secret, he has the highest opinion of my merits, though he entirely overlooked the obvious fact that he would have better carried out his benevolent and patronising intentions towards me by affecting (just now) to consider me only a worthless poor chap. But even the most subtly-trained European intellects are curiously backward in such elementary chicaneries!

3 P.M.—The jury are assembling their heads. They seem generally agreed—except a couple of stout ones who are lolling back and listening with mulish simpers. If I were certain that they were fellow-colleagues from *Punch*, I would encourage them by secret signs to persevere—but who knows that they may not be partisans of the plaintiff? If so, they deserve to be condignly punished for such obstinate dull-headedness. . . . The foreman has asked that they may retire, whereupon Justice HONEYGALL answers them, "certainly," and retires his own person contemporaneously. . . .

3.15 P.M.—The jury are still absentees. In reply to my questions, my solicitor says that, as far as he can see, the damages can't be under £250, and may amount to a cold "Thou" (or thousand)! Adding that, if I had only let him brief WITHERINGTON, Q.C., I might have got off

with £50, or even what is nominally called a farthing. But I say to him, in such a case how could I possibly have acquired any forensic distinction? To which he has no reply ready.

3.30.—The jury are still delayed by the two stouts. I have just attempted to chat over the affair with JESSIMINA and Madame MANKLETOW, and ascertain whether the former will not accept myself at the eleventh hour as payment in full of all damages, costs, &c. Mrs M. replies that the jurymen are notoriously in favour of her daughter, and that she would as soon see her in gates of grave as the bride of a black man. On closer approach to JESSIMINA, I have made the rather disenchanting discovery that she has rendered her nose lilac from too much superfluity of face-powder. Perhaps, after all, the damages may not be so very . . . . The jury are coming back. Hon'ble Judge is fetched hurriedly. . . . Mister Associate asks: "Have you agreed upon your verdict?" Answered that they have. "Do they find for plaintiff or defendant?" "For plaintiff." And the damages? "*Twenty-five Thou ! ! !*" My stars! O Gemini! Who'd have thought it? My Progenitor will never pay the piper for such an atrociously cacophonous tune. . . . I am a done-for!

3.35.—All right. I was deceived by aural

incorrectness. It is not twenty-five *thou.*—but twenty-five *pounds!*

3.45. — Hiphussar! Cockadoodledoo! A mere bite from a flea! . . . The plaintiff has fallen into hystericals from disappointed avariciousness. . . . There is some idle talk about costs following the event, and certifying for a special jury—a luxury for which it seems I am not to fork out. The case is over.

. . . . .

Outside in the corridor and hall I was the cynosure of neighbouring eyes, and vociferously applauded as a "good old nigger," and told that "now they *shouldn't* be long," though for what else they were waiting I could not learn. Madame MANKLETOW did overtake me near the doors and invite me to tea and talk in a coffee and bun emporium, hinting that she had recently misunderstood the state of her daughter's heart, and that she had in reality been ardently desirous from the first to accept my offer. To which I replied that the gates of grave were now hermetically closed, and that the plaintiff, like the fabulous canine, had thrown away the meaty bone of a first-class opportunity in exchange for the rather flimsy and shadowy form of a twenty-five pound note. But, as a chivalrous, I refrained from saying that I had been thus totally put off by an over-powdered nose.

Then I proceeded, amidst cheering populaces, up Chancery Lane to a certain Bar, wherein young HOWARD regaled myself and solicitor very handsomely upon anchovy sandwiches and champagne-wine, after which I returned to Hereford Road full of ovation and cheerfulness.

It is practically certain that my sire, the Mooktear, will cockahoop with paternal pride on hearing by telegram of my moral victory, and celebrate same with fireworks and festivities, besides sending ample remittances for all costs out of pocket, &c.

So I am now to return shortly to Calcutta, when my time will be too exclusively taken up with forensic triumphs for any further jotting or tittling for *Punch*, or similar periodicals.

After all, for a fellow who is able to enchant multitudes, and persuade their intellects and reasoning faculties by dint of golden verbolatory of diction, mere sedentary journalism is a very mediocre and poorly-paid pursuit!

Notwithstanding my cessation as a contributor, I shall, on arriving in India, infallibly recommend *Punch* to all my innumerable aunts, families, and friends, as a highly respectable periodical—provided that the munificent and free-hearted generosity of those Hon'ble Misters, the Editor and Proprietors, shall account me worthy to draw a monthly retiring pension for my distinguished services.

And, with prostrated respects to my honoured readers and their respective relatives, I have the honour to remain, ever and anon,

Their Excellencies most grateful,
humble, and obedient servant,
H. B. J.

THE END

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